The theatre actor's post-performance needs and the role of the cool-down

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

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St Mary's University, Twickenham
2021

Abstract

Theatre actors learn and generally practice warm-up processes meant to physically and mentally prepare them for the challenges of performance. However, they neither learn nor gradually develop cool-down practices, to be utilised following theatre performances. As a result, they are often unable to recognise, verbalise or meet their post-performance needs, related to physical/emotional, mental and social exertion.

Why would the immediate post-performance phase be considered important? During and following performances, theatre actors experience adrenaline rush, emotions and visceral drives (such as hunger, thirst, pain or exhaustion), regularly and up to 8 times a week, for weeks or months at a time. In addition, established cultural norms require the actors' engagement with immediate post-performance socialisation, within personal or professional contexts, which further exacerbates their considerable exertion, especially when combined with alcohol. The lack of cool-down strategies and protocols taught at training environments, renders actors unable to recognise the significance of post-performance transitions, leaving them exposed to disturbed sleep, alcohol dependency, fatigue and burn-out.

In addition to the collection and analysis of pertinent secondary sources related to the post-performance cool-down, this study engaged with contemporary professional actors in two ways. First, actors were invited to provide their conceptual understanding and practice of their warm-up and cool-down routines, in interview settings (Chapter 4). Second, actors conducted cool-down processes following theatre performances and provided their feedback in interviews (Chapter 5).

Throughout this thesis, I argue that the conscious negotiation of transitions matters to actors, not only prior to the performance (warm-up) but also during their immediate post-performance phase (cool-down). Moreover, the actors' feedback indicates that training environments could play a central role in the introducing of post-performance discourse and cool-down practice within their curriculum, in order to address this gap in training. Educating actors on the cool-down during the early stages of their training, will provide them with the confidence and agency required to develop, refine, personalise (as well as occasionally knowingly ignore) their post-performance phase as professionals, for a more sustainable and rewarding career.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I am indebted to my supervisors Professor Allan Simmons, Dr Michelle Paull, Dr Mark Donnelly, Professor Trevor Walker, and Kasia Zaremba-Byrne. Without their continuous encouragement and support, I would be lost in a sea of words and thoughts. Their guidance gave me the confidence to engage with organisations, as well as theatre makers and educators. Their patience and attention to detail provided me with the tools to challenge my own ideas and their reflection on paper.

A special thank you to all the actors that engaged with this research, for offering their valuable time in interview settings, as well as to the theatre companies that collaborated in the conducting of the cool-down. Their contribution provided a most valuable snapshot, in the appreciation of contemporary post-performance professional attitudes and practices. I would also like to acknowledge the theatre makers and educators that engaged with this research, in interview or note-taking settings. Their thoughtful feedback and viewpoints provided much needed perspective.

A special acknowledgment to those supporting this research by providing professional contacts, in the search for actors available for interviews in Austria and Greece: Dr. Wolfgang Sinhuber and Maria Skoularikou-Petri. Also, I would like to thank my two children, Markos and Monika, whose love provided the necessary fuel required to find the finish line.

Last but not least, without Student Finance England and the loan provided for the commencement and completion of this research, I would have been unable to engage in this process and this work may have never taken place.

Contents

A. Introduction

The central preoccupation of this thesis is the theatre actors' immediate post-performance phase, the role of the cool-down in meeting their significant exertion and the potential of ordered transitions from artistic, to social and private contexts. This represents a direct continuation of my previous study on the blending of artistic and social performance, what I call 'perpetual performance' (Panoutsos, 2017). Currently, the cool-down 'is something that is mostly ignored…and that's a problem for actors. It affects their health. It may also affect the quality of their acting' (Mandell, 2017, p.39). A closer examination reveals an existing discrepancy in actor training: between widely taught and practiced pre-performance warm-up practices and unknown cool-down ones (Seton, 2008; 2009).

Besides examining secondary sources available, I interviewed 16 contemporary professional theatre actors working in Europe and the USA (Chapter 4), and engaged with 3 theatre companies for the conducting of a cool-down process specifically devised for the purposes of this study: the Contemporary Cool-Down (Chapter 5). Scholarship on the subject of the cool-down begins with Schechner (1983): 'little work has been done on the "cool-down", at least in the Euro-American tradition' (1983, p.97). This line of argument is connected to the present day, by the gradual emergence of researchers echoing these concerns, including Geer (1993); Bloch (1993); Burgoyne, Poulin and Rearden (1999); Seton (2008; 2009); Kurtz (2011); Meyer-Dinkgräfe (2013); Maxwell, Seton and Szabó (2015); Taylor (2016); Mee (Mandell, 2017); Seton, Maxwell and Szabó (2019). Overall, this thesis's main aims are:

- To discuss and evaluate the existing state of knowledge within the post-performance phase, including the relatively unknown cool-down processes already developed by practitioners and educators (Chapter 1).

- To better determine the field, by distinguishing the cool-down from the de-role and the de-brief (Introduction), as well as the immediate post-performance exertion from stresses related to training, rehearsals or working conditions (Chapter 2).
- To further define the post-performance cool-down as a process accommodating transitions, much like the pre-performance warm-up; distinct from discourses relating to therapy (Introduction; Chapter 1).
- To particularise and distinguish the actors' post-performance needs from other performers, and consider the potential adoption of cool-down processes utilised by athletes or dancers (Chapter 2) or from Eastern performance traditions (Chapter 3).
- In regards to the continuing absence of the cool-down in training and practice identified in literature (Chapter 1), to explain this gap by engaging with actors, theatre companies, theatre makers and educators (Chapter 4; Chapter 5).
- To collectively consider the conclusions of this research, reiterate the potential of the systematic post-performance cool-down for actors and make recommendations for its establishment (Chapter 6).

Overall, this thesis argues that at present, the practice and potential of ordered cool-down processes remain unknown (Maxwell, Seton and Szabó, 2015, p.108), whilst the actors' immediate post-performance exertion is too significant to remain overlooked (Seton, Maxwell and Szabó, 2019, pp.134-37). Addressing the imbalance between the warm-up and the cool-down can contribute in improving the actors' psychophysical needs (Brandfonbrener, 1992), as well as provide conscious management of the actors' immediate post-performance networking, an important parameter in attaining desirable career outcomes (Mast, 1986, p.136).

It is further argued that training environments can prove pivotal in the establishment of the cool-down. This is because actors revealed that their warm-up routines represent a direct

continuation of practices discussed and taught at training environments. Likewise, the absence of post-performance cool-down training is consistent with the actors' unfamiliarity with its concept and practice within professional settings. Although causality cannot be proven with certainty, the correlation between training and practice appears too often in this thesis for it to be considered a mere coincidence (Chapter 4; Chapter 5). It is not unreasonable then to conjecture that: 'if this practice is established at drama schools, it is likely that graduates will take the practice into employment environments, eventually formalising this ritual as best practice in the general acting profession' (Taylor, 2016, p.199).

The cool-down following a theatre performance

Acting processes are no longer a specialist subject reserved for actors, educators and other theatre makers. On the contrary, they are widely available to the public, which consumes with interest unexpected outcomes, such as Daniel Day Lewis' storming out in the middle of a performance of *Hamlet* at the National Theatre in 1989 'never to return on stage' (Trueman, 2012); (Kemp, 2012, p.153), 'that Jeremy Irons had trouble withdrawing from his character in *The Real Thing*, that Richard Burbage took two hours to cool-down after playing *Richard III*, and that Basil Rathbone gave up playing *Sherlock Holmes* because he felt in danger of losing his identity to the famous detective' (Geer, 1993, p.150). Notwithstanding the general public's fascination with behind the scenes anecdotes, such interest is not only inevitable but also necessary because of ethical considerations; such as the provision of safe practices and duty of care for actors in training and professional settings (Brandfonbrener, 1992). The ignoring of such behind the scenes anecdotes or their acceptance as inevitable, does not only expose actors to the dangers of burn-out (Barker, 1977, pp.2-3); (Wolford and Schechner, 1997, p.192); (Thomson and Jaque, 2017, pp.364-7), but also jeopardises the high standards

of an entertainment industry highly dependent on actors to fuel a lucrative business, in its various formats, such as film, television, and theatre (Panero, 2019).

It is not within the scope of this thesis, however, to discuss duty of care on all aspects of the theatre actor's life, such as the particular nature and demands of their professionalization (Lane, 1960); (Mast, 1986), psychological interpretations of emotion experienced (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975); (Hamilton, 1997) or comprehensive analysis of the actors' training, work and lifestyle (Entertainment Assist, 2016); (Thomson and Jaque, 2017). Instead, this thesis merely focuses on the cool-down process following a theatre performance, collectively considering accumulated activation from the pre-performance and performance phases. Pre-performance stresses may include the effort required to make the transition from ordinary sociality to the symbolic world of performance (Schechner, 2002, p.205); (Hague and Sandage, 2016, p.127), stresses related to the vocal and physical warm-up (Schechner, 1985, p.219), as well as instances of stage-fright (Aaron, 1986); (Giles, 2011). Performance stresses may include very significant psychophysical activation (Konijn, 2000, p.109), as well as the experience of 'ecstasy' and altered states of consciousness (Scheiffele, 2001, pp.184-5).

Furthermore, it is important to distinguish the cool-down from terms that are often used interchangeably, such as 'de-role' (Wolf, 2018, p.4) or 'debriefing' (Taylor, 2016, p.191). More particularly, the de-role should be considered as a process taking place following the end of the performance run (Sacay-Bagwell, 2013, pp.22-3), when actors no longer need to keep the role alive within them for future performances, 'when the experience is coming to an end' (Jones, 2014, p.3) and where 'with self-awareness, time, and/or personal and interpersonal care…long-term character lingerings generally fade away' (Szlawieniec-Haw, 2020, p.56). For example, actor Phillip Boykin also locates the de-role 'at the end of the run' and coming out if it 'takes anywhere from three weeks to a month' (Mandell, 2017, p.38). In

contrast, the cool-down refers to the immediate post-performance phase that takes place after each and every performance, during a performance run in progress.

Similarly, although debriefing can be conducted daily during rehearsals, rehearsals should be distinguished from performances (Aaron, 1986, p.104); (Konijn, 2000, pp.162-3), whilst 'giving notes after a show is very different to giving notes in a rehearsal room' (Mitchell, 2009, p.216) - not recommended due to the actors' vulnerable state (2009, p.215). Also, daily post-performance de-briefs may only take place during the first days of the performance; after that theatre directors rarely return to the performance (Marowitz, 1978, p.97) and only because they may be contractually obligated to do so (Alfreds, 2007, p.295); (Swain, 2011, p.272), unless a participating actor also happens to be the director of the performance.

A strictly post-performance context

This thesis also distinguishes post-performance exertion that the cool-down can help manage, from wellness or the need for therapy, the latter requiring intervention by medical professionals, outside the actors' classroom or professional environments (Szlawieniec-Haw, 2020, pp.114-8). In other words, acting is neither considered in terms of pathology, as an inherently detrimental profession for the actors' health, nor the actor's mind 'a sick organ to be healed' (Gelernter, 2016, p.251). Importantly, actors' accounts located in secondary sources and the ones provided in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 were not overly pathologized or stereotyped in this thesis. At the same time, as actor and trainer Uta Hagen (1991) points out, top physical and mental condition for actors are prerequisites: 'the actor ought to be more sound in mind and body than other people, since he learns to understand the psychological problems of human beings when putting his own passions, his loves, fears, and rages in service to the characters he plays' (1991, p.xiii). Similarly, Taylor (2016) points out that 'acting…would be safe if the person was psychologically "solid" and had a clear understanding of what "acting" was' (2016, pp.194-5).

The distinction between optimal health states and artistic processes is necessary, because of emerging literature considering the actor's exertion from the perspective of Performance Arts Medicine practices, as first identified by Brandfonbrener (1992) and from subsequent studies engaging with a variety of concerns, such as stage-fright (Kaplan, 1969); (Aaron, 1986); (Steptoe et al., 1995); (Giles, 2011), emotional vulnerability related to trauma (Thomson and Jaque, 2012); (Jones, 2014), boundary blurring (Burgoyne, Poulin and Rearden, 1999); (Robb, 2017); (Panero, 2019) and drama therapy (Scheiffele, 2001); (Arias, 2019). Although such studies highlight valuable psychological viewpoints, in locating and analysing a variety of issues that actors may be managing upon their entrance into training or developing over time as professionals, they do not solely focus on the particularity of the actors' immediate post-performance exertion and needs.

Such studies remain relevant however, because they provide valuable insights into the actors' overall professionalization, including the absence of a clear career progression (Mast, 1986, p.136); (Thomson and Jaque, 2017, p.316), the realities of low remuneration or/and unemployment (Hamilton, 1997, p.4), the dangers of the regular experiencing of multiple levels of consciousness (Scheiffele, 2001); (Hetzler, 2008) and the 'show must go on' (Jones, 2014, p.1) or 'soldier on' (Prior, et al., 2015, p.64) attitudes within the entertainment industry, which normalise exertion (Entertainment Assist, 2016). At the same time, a distinction is being made, between the immediate post-performance exertion a healthy actor may experience and medical needs, which may require medical intervention (Giles, 2011). The actors' work may be demanding but it is not inherently unhealthy and it would be misleading to primarily consider it in terms of pathology; to be tired or exhausted is not necessarily the same as to be unwell.

Instead, this thesis adopts Szlawieniec-Haw's position of the acting profession incorporating both 'costs and rewards' (2020, pp.4-6), whereby 'costs are not inherently problems' (2020, p.4), whilst actors also experience huge rewards as a result of their process (Hamilton, 1997). Although the work of the actor has significant costs, acting does not require a solution: 'you cannot "solve" human experience. Even if you could, there would not be one solution appropriate for every workplace and desired by every actor' (Szlawieniec-Haw, 2020, p.4). In other words, the cool-down is here examined strictly as a process meant to empower actors with the best available training, to manage their immediate post-performance exertion.

Actors are athletes of transitions

What is the particular nature of the actors' post-performance needs? In addition to physical exertion reflected in heart rates reaching up to '180 beats per minute' during theatre performances (Konijn, 2000, p.109), the regular experience of adrenaline rush (Christoffersen, 1993); (Orzechowicz, 2008), emotional and visceral drives that linger on following a theatre performance (Loewenstein, 1996); (De Ridder, et al., 2014), actors are required to make quick transitions from self to role and from role to self, from rehearsal to performance and from artistic to social performance (States, [1929] 1985); (Gennep, [1908] 1960). The frequent and variant nature of those transitions indicate that actors should not primarily be considered athletes of the heart (Artaud, [1938] 2013, p.93) but athletes of transitions, a view also echoed by Schechner (1983): 'performer training focuses on techniques not on making one person into another, but in permitting the performer to act in-between identities' (1983, p.95). In the absence of taught cool-down processes that mark the end of the performance and signify the return to the everyday rhythms and dynamics of sociality, actors surrender to the pressures of immediate and alcohol fuelled socialisation (Schechner, 1983, p.97) or networking obligations, which are 'impossible…to do…without drinking' (Seton, Maxwell and Szabó, 2019, p.128). These informal practices exacerbate the

actors' already significant post-performance needs, as well as ignore the requirement to make conscious transitions from their artistic to their private or social commitments (Mast, 1986).

A compulsory process?

Although in training environments actors are exposed to a variety of approaches and techniques, none are strictly compulsory in professional settings. The rationale behind a non-compulsory cool-down is simple; the need for agency and personal responsibility. For example, despite the numerous actor-training methods and variety of training environments available, there are several examples of successful actors that have undertaken no formal training, such as Miriam Margolyes, Hugh Quarshie, William Dafoe and Elaine Stritch (Luckhurst and Veltman, 2001). Moreover, actors with formal training are rarely defined by one single approach, but constantly develop their process, perpetually challenged and enriched by the particularities of each production and its collaborators. For example, actor Roshan Seth admits that despite studying at L.A.M.D.A. 'I have no set way of approaching a script…for the development of character, again, I have no set way' (Zucker, 2002, p.166). Similarly, actor Kerry Fox describes a varied training from Stanislavski to Grotowski and a method of working that is also varied: 'there was no one philosophy, I believe that actors work in many different ways all the time; there is no right or wrong' (Zucker, 2002, p.128).

These accounts indicate that there is no right or wrong way of working, only an understanding of what can be expected from each approach, which in theatre making is related to embodiment and 'tacit knowledge' (Cornford, 2015, p.91), the result of exposure to practice (Odom, 2017). Although the cool-down should systematically be taught within training environments, actors should also retain agency on its utilisation in professional ones. For example, practitioner and teacher Anna Healey in a zoom interview dated 27 January 2021 stated that after the performance:

> it feels that when the job's done, when the bow has been taken, "that's it". And I think to be honest, from my experience of being an actor, when that

> happens you are on a high, the endorphins and everything, you are not in a place of reflection…you are in this energetic forward space. I think it's important for people to have the opportunity and not to feel that they have to [cool-down] but that's it's encouraged and I think that is that checking in, isn't it? Some actors need that and maybe some actors don't need that (Healey, zoom interview).

Healey's view reflects the pragmatic recognition that in professional settings, working conditions and post-performance needs are not fixed, but may vary widely. Consequently, actors require finding a balance between remaining sensitive to their needs, but also flexible enough to meet the rehearsal and performance cultures encountered. With the pertinent cool-down training in place and by remaining free from dogmatic approaches, actors retain the agency to occasionally 'knowingly' ignore (Barton, 1984, p.44) and other times develop, refine and personalise their post-performance phase, in the spirit of perpetual self-cultivation of their overall artistic process. In the next introductory chapter, I will introduce my own particular training and background as a professional actor, in an attempt to explain my interest in this area of research, as well as provide a theatre practitioner's perspective in this discourse. Also, the format of headings and subheadings used in this thesis follows the following four-level order and fonts:

1. Chapter

Main chapter section in italics

First subheading in bold

Second subheading

B. The Researcher

By introducing the researcher, I engage with two questions. First, how did I get exposed to the question of the cool-down? Second, what attracted me in this discourse? In contrast to some researchers (Kurtz, 2011, pp.1-2); (Sacay-Bagwell, 2013, p.22), my interest does not emerge from a single significant event in my training or professional acting career. The unknown concept of the cool-down became apparent during my engagement with performance studies and particularly with Schechner's (1985) seven-part performance sequence: 'training, workshops, rehearsals, warm-ups, performance, cool-down and aftermath' (1985, p.16). This prompted a re-examination of my own post-performance needs during my 15-year theatrical career, which although not particularly damaging, in retrospect seemed unconscious, uncontrollable and inevitable. Would I have benefited from systematic cool-down processes as a working actor? Would others?

For Schechner (2002), 'the relationship between studying performance and doing performance is integral' (2002, p.1). Similarly, my interest in the cool-down is twofold: that of an actor, as well as a researcher of theatre and performance theory. It is within this tension between theory and practice, that I locate the question of the post-performance cool-down as necessary and important. From this standpoint, it would be counter-intuitive to refrain from utilising my training and professional experiences, when discussing actor-related processes and their impact within personal and professional contexts.

At the same time, I recognise the dangers of relativist input: 'unconscious biases act like filters between our perceptions and our intellects. They enable us to screen out observations that do not fit with our preconceived notions and to see causal relationships where none exist'

(Weil, [1972] 2004, p.8). Notwithstanding my familiarity with the actor's practice, objectivity matters, because what I may perceive as significant for my own practice, may not be pertinent to other theatre practitioners. Concerning the cool-down or any other part of the actors' process, it is not my place to make assumptions on each and every performer's needs:

> we should guard against the fallacy of projection: of assuming that other people have states of mind, interests, and values precisely like our own. Yet it is by reflecting upon the factors that seem vital in our own experience of becoming, that we identify with the issues that are important (Allport, 1968, p.23).

Allport (1968) here assigns value to personal experiences and critical self-reflection, as necessary in identifying what may be seen as 'important' and therefore worth further study. This is in correspondence with McConachie (2015), who points out that the 'objectivity' and 'relativism' binaries have 'collapsed' and that 'rigorous first-person perspective of phenomenology can be an important corrective to the attempt to maintain a third-person aloofness, which remains the norm for most scientific investigation' (McConachie, 2015, p.8). In other words, whilst objectivity is indispensable, the background and point of view of the researcher remains valuable. This is because it reveals the angle from which the investigation is conducted, as well as the implicit and explicit advantages and limitations (and blind spots) of the researcher.

The relation between embodied performance and theoretical discourse

It is also important to highlight that the ability to switch hats between theory and practice is not by any means unique (neither compulsory, nor preferable), but a common occurrence amongst performance theory researchers. To name but a few that reflected their practice on paper, in addition to the well-known examples of Stanislavski (2008) and Meisner (Meisner and Longwell, 1987), theatre actor Uta Hagen won two Tony awards prior to contributing to acting methodological approaches as a writer (Hagen, 1973; 1991), Richard Schechner's

performance theory is directly informed by his 13-year practice as a founder and artistic director of The Performance Group (Schechner, 1983), psychologist Glenn Wilson's professional background is located in opera (Wilson, 1985), psychologist Stephen Aaron's in theatre acting and directing (Aaron, 1986) and psychologist Linda Hamilton's in ballet (Hamilton, 1997).

Examples of practice as a means to theoretical insights can also be found in researchers without performance backgrounds, exploring alternative avenues to further inform their research, by way of embodied experiences, otherwise known as tacit knowledge: a form of knowledge that cannot easily, verbally or otherwise, be communicated to others, what Noice and Noice (2002) call 'embodied cognition' (2002, p.16). This definition is in correspondence with Cornford's (2015) view on such practice: 'the actor's tacit knowledge, then, is also a form of embodied knowledge which is not reducible to explicit rules or abstract, conceptual principles, but experienced as an exploration of the possibilities of physical engagement with the material of a play' (2015, p.91). In performance studies, such practice-based research can be seen as advantageous, because, as Odom (2017) points out, 'Theatre is active. While a great deal of knowledge can be transmitted through writing, this writing should never substitute for a connection to active theatre' (2017, p.287).

To acquire such knowledge, a researcher from any discipline could choose to observe and/or participate in theatre-related practices, in order to experience first-hand the challenges of performance, what Odom (2017) calls 'active theatre'. For example, Orzechowicz (2008), although a social psychologist, participated in three theatre productions as an actor, conducted interviews, seminars and other immersive activities 'over one thousand hours of field work' (2008, p.145) in order to acquire such tacit knowledge and reflect it in his study. Similarly, anthropologist Victor Turner (1982) extensively collaborated with Schechner

(1983), in his effort to better inform the concepts of ritual, liminality and conflict, via 'performing ethnographies' (Turner, 1982, p.92). Due to my having worked as a professional actor in three different countries, for over 15 years, I can directly refer to such tacit knowledge, rendering additional training for the purposes of this research unnecessary. In practice, this experience provides an explicit understanding of the actors' artistic processes, as well as their overall socialisation and professional pressures, providing two main advantages: a) an awareness of the actors' anti-intellectual approach to their work and b) a familiarity with training and working practices for actors. Those two aspects are further examined below.

Awareness of anti-intellectual approach

My familiarity with the way most actors prefer to discuss their work, proved advantageous during the interview stage (Chapter 4) and field work (Chapter 5). This is because actors value tacit knowledge over and above theoretical conceptualisations, actively resisting the intellectualisation of their process (Konijn, 2000). Although actors learn to thoroughly objectify themselves through their training and rehearsal processes and 'learn skills that include enhanced attention, memory, concentration, imagination, emotional expression, physical action, and intellectual analysis' (Thomson and Jaque, 2012, p.361), they do not conceptualise performing in the same way a theorist would (Hagen, 1973, p.15); (Swift, 1976, p.41); (Jones, 2014, p.11); (Moulton, 2016, p.65).

Moreover, this anti-intellectual approach is frequently seen as a prerequisite for actors, who are expected to 'access the work via a physical entry point rather than an intellectual one' (Moor, 2013, p.114). Frantic Assembly is such an example; a self-taught company of actors, who quite consciously focused on the practical problems of devising and staging, rather than theoretical ones (Graham and Hoggett, 2009, pp.24-40). However, on the other side of the spectrum, Soto-Morettini (2010) notes that actors deliberately and systematically avoiding

any engagement with the conceptualisation of their working process, encounter difficulties in the 'sustaining…performance[s]…for a long run' (2010, p.10).

Familiarity with training environments

My familiarity with acting training environments also proved advantageous during the conducting of this research. This includes studies undertaken in Greece (Veaki Drama School, Athens, 1989-92); the UK (the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art, London, 1992-93); the USA (the American Academy of Dramatic Arts, Los Angeles, 1995) and again in the UK (Meisner Technique with the Impulse Company, London, 2014-15). This extensive professional training allowed me to confirm the absence of taught and ordered post-performance transitions, as well as the established nature of the warm-up, in a variety of institutions.

However, my training and work as a professional actor did not only provide me with advantages but also limitations. For example, there was a lot of new ground I had to cover in approaching a familiar industry, from an unfamiliar position: that of a researcher. This point is developed in the following introductory chapter, where the methodological approach and methods utilised for the conducting of this research are introduced and my engagement with the entertainment industry discussed.

C. Methods and Methodology

As the methodological approach and methods would have to account for the particularity of studying actors and their process, one of the first questions I engaged with was whether qualitative or quantitative methods would better suit this research. By utilising Dr Canetta's clarification that 'methodology is the study of the general approach to inquiry in a given field' and 'method [refers to] specific techniques, tools or procedures applied to achieve a given objective' (St Mary's University, Twickenham, 18 April 2019), in this introductory chapter I will explain the broader choices made in methodology and the particular methods utilised in the conducting of this research. Prior to doing so, it is important to point out inherent challenges in researching actor related processes.

One obvious challenge is related more generally to the quantifying of the arts (Shank, 1969), because the academic discipline of theatre and performance studies 'is essentially an argumentational rather than a knowledge discipline' (Hart, 2018, p.69). In other words, 'in art…a theory may be useful in aiding understanding or providing a basis for criticism, but it is not right or wrong in the scientific sense – some theories may simply be more useful than others' (Shank, 1969, p.3). For example, in researching and evaluating actors' processes Noice and Noice (2002) point out similar challenges:

> Is one form of preparation superior to another in terms of the end result? Is it even possible to judge fine acting according to a strict set of standards?… So far as the authors know, no empirical study of "acting quality" has ever been performed. Indeed, the cognitive community is not even in agreement on the determinants of true expertise in any artistic field…our own belief is that practice and training produce a very high degree of proficiency but that it is still an open question whether proficiency explains artistry (2002, p.15).

This uncertain ground that Noice and Noice (2002) identify in the evaluation of acting processes is acknowledged in this thesis, also confirmed in the accounts of actors obtained in

the tradition of phenomenology (Luckhurst and Veltman, 2001); (Zucker, 2002). However, this does not render quantitative methods irrelevant.

Quantitative methods

Quantitative research is concerned with the collection of accurate measurements and the asking of a variety of questions, including the transparency and reliability of the measuring instruments; sample representation; variables that are 'clearly defined and shown to be measurable' (Hart, 2018, p.83). There is plenty of useful research that has taken place in this way in theatre and performance studies:

> Magnetic Resource Imaging (MRI) scanners are now able to monitor actors' brain activity, and wiring electrodes to dancers' heads in rehearsal enables scientists and choreographers to map their cognitive responses to movement and analyse neuro images of their embodied reflexes. Cutting-edge twenty-first century science is finding new ways to measure the unpredictability of performers' emotions, and the neuroscience of emotion has been furthered by laboratory experiments on the disciplined bodies of performers (Nicholson, 2013, p.21).

Such research may also engage with the collection of statistical data measuring substance abuse, sleep disturbance or burn-out and comparing them against the rest of the population, in an attempt to highlight a variety of sociological and/or psychological patterns and concerns (Entertainment Assist, 2016); (Thomson and Jaque, 2017); (Seton, Maxwell and Szabó, 2019). Despite the benefits and potential of the quantitative approach, this was not selected for this particular research, because evidence that verifies significant performance (as well as pre and post-performance) activation in actors already exists (Villiers, 1942; 1968); (Hague and Sandage, 2016); (Weisweiler, 1983; 1985); (Konijn, 2000); (Loewenstein, 1996); (Cafasso, 2018). In other words, this thesis's focus is not the objective observation and measuring of phenomena, such as post-performance exertion, but their meaning for actors, which requires a subjective focus:

> Mental life is subjective by definition. Private experience can only be subjective. And the mind creates private experience. So the science of the

> mind must be a subjective science. We want neurobiology to explain the phenomena we've discovered, but first *we must discover them*, and be sure of them (Gelernter, 2016, pp.7-8).

Put differently, proof of post-performance activation and exertion fails to explain the lack of cool-down practice during this phase. It is the actors' verbalisation of that activation that is of interest here; not the quantity of cognitive activity the MRI can measure (Nicholson, 2013), but the quality of the post-performance phase experienced (how does it feel) and what would be in the way in addressing the actors' needs.

Needs experienced versus needs verbalised

The distinction between needs experienced and needs verbalised has been powerfully made by anaesthesiologist Henry K. Beecher (1946; 1956), also known for his work on the placebo effect (1955). Beecher (1956) argued that 'the intensity of suffering is largely determined by what the pain means to the patient' (1956, p.1609). By comparing wounded soldiers in battle and postoperative civilians back at home, Beecher (1956) pointed out a contradiction in the amount of pain relief utilised by both groups. More specifically, despite the soldiers' horrific injuries, only 32% of them requested 'narcotics' for the pain; in contrast, 83% of postoperative civilians requested pain relief of similar strength, despite their much less severe needs (1956, p.1609). Beecher concluded that it is the different mind-set between the soldiers and civilians, which accounted for this counter-intuitive discovery:

> his wound suddenly releases him from an exceedingly dangerous environment, one filled with fatigue, discomfort, anxiety, fear and real danger of death, and gives him a ticket to the safety of the hospital. His troubles are about over, or he thinks they are. He overcompensates and becomes euphoric…on the other hand, the civilian's accident marks the beginning of disaster for him. It is impossible to say whether this produces an increased awareness of his pain, increased suffering; possibly it does (Beecher, 1946, p.99).

In other words, for the soldiers, their severe injuries meant the end of their presence in the theatre of operations, surviving war and the return back home – a positive prospect. In contrast, a family sustaining car crash injuries (Beecher, 1946, p.99) puts a dent in their

health, including the likelihood of long postoperative rehabilitation – a negative prospect (O'Connor et al., 2011, p.159).

Beecher's work on the psychology and perception of pain has been followed by many researchers since, such as Weil (2004), Hansen and Streltzer (2005), as well as Price (2006): 'pain stems from both physiological and psychological factors. The degree of tissue damage may contribute to a person's experience of pain but personal perceptions are frequently more important' (2006, p.175). If we replace the word 'pain' with 'post-performance exertion', it becomes apparent that objective readings taken in the quantitative tradition are not in themselves enough to consider the post-performance needs of actors, because of what Price (2006) calls 'personal perceptions'. Likewise, Weil (2004) highlights the similarity between total anaesthesia and deep trance (2004, p.28), indicating the brain's potential to manipulate experience without chemical aid. In other words, despite physiological activation and hormonal changes which can be objectively recorded, actors develop a variety of responses to the exertion experienced, ranging from the ignoring, to the normalisation or the exaggeration of those needs, requiring further clarification from the actors themselves.

An example of this variety of responses can be found in the imbalance between the conducting of the warm-up and the cool-down. As actors are taught the warm-up in a systematic and compulsory way at drama school, it should be no surprise that they display a positive attitude towards this process as professionals. Likewise, actors fail to verbalise and meet their post-performance exertion, because they have been trained to normalise it and view it as inevitable. In other words, the cool-down is here investigated within the context of an unknown process, neither taught nor gradually developed by the actors themselves, despite the existence of post-performance exertion that can be measured objectively. This means that irrespective of how demanding this exertion appears to be in quantitative measurements, if

actors remain unable to verbalise their needs or continue to normalise them as inevitable, they will also continue to resist structured and systematic cool-down processes (or discourses), altogether dismissing or downgrading the potential of a marked post-performance phase. Moreover, this absence in training and practice is problematic for actors, because lack of ordered post-performance transitions make alcohol fuelled socialisations the default position during this phase (Mandell, 2017, p.42); (Seton, Ian Maxwell and Szabó, 2019, p.128), whilst prolonged alcohol use risks the experiencing of very significant withdrawal symptoms (Weil, 2004, p.35). With these research objectives in mind, qualitative methods were preferred over quantitative ones. Irrespective of the intensity objectively measured and recorded, it is the actors' interpretation of it that becomes pertinent, leading to the acknowledging, meeting or ignoring of their post-performance needs.

Qualitative methods

This research was conducted by collating relevant secondary sources and, by obtaining qualitative original data, primarily via semi-structured interviews, in the tradition of phenomenology. This method aimed at directly uncovering the nature of the post-performance exertion and impact, verbalised by the actors themselves, unearthed from several layers of their unconscious normalisation, what Heidegger [1926] (2001) calls 'the Being of entities…covered up so extensively that it becomes forgotten and no question arises about it or about its meaning' (2001, p.59). This approach maintains Husserl's crucial distinction between the 'life-world' or 'true being' and the scientific 'method' [1936] (1970, p.51), with the emphasis on what Merleau-Ponty calls the 'embodied I' [1945] (2005, p.247), in an effort to 'to understand subjective experience' (Gelernter, 2016, p.10). Engagement was not limited to actors, but included producers, theatre makers, training environments, and the British Association of Performance Arts Medicine (BAPAM).

Researching actors

Interview accounts focusing on the collection and analysis of professional actors' cool-down processes are rarely conducted - Mandell's article (2017) represents an exception - as most research focuses on their training, rehearsal and performance experiences (Bates, 1986); (Luckhurst and Veltman, 2001); (Zucker, 2002). The interview method remains a popular method for the collection of data: 'a personal interview would be the preferred method for gathering information, however there were other factors to consider, such as the difficulty in reaching the research population, the scarcity of financial and human resources and anticipation of a low response' (Konijn, 2000, p.114). In hindsight, Konijn's (2000) concerns confirmed my own challenges in gathering data in this way, receiving a low response in the numbers of actors (16 in total) and theatre companies that agreed to participate (3 in total). Despite these challenges, I did not utilise the payment of nominal fees for participating actors or companies and rejected the funding of this research from external organisations of any kind, in order to prevent conflict of interest. Although such incentives may have somewhat simplified this process and increased the available data, I sought to distinguish business-as-usual engagement on a transactional level, from a genuine sense of interest and attitudes for this discourse, free from financial incentives. In the next section, I will elaborate on the use of the interview method (Chapter 4) and the devising of a cool-down process for actors to utilise following a theatre performance (Chapter 5).

Interview-only method - Chapter 4

The interview-only method, utilising semi-structured interviews and employing a thematic analysis of their concerns, was preferred over the use of standard questionnaires. The latter method's overly systematic nature can often restrict their scope, for example, resulting in 'poor completion rate[s]' (Moor, 2013, p.27), amongst other limitations noted by Schatzman and Strauss (1973):

> [the researcher] requires the variation and nuance lost in questionnaire construction, and most of his respondents also require them for expressing

> their own actions and identities. Witness the annoyance, frustration - even fury - in a responder's inability to express himself to his own satisfaction when confronted with questionnaire choices (Schatzman and Strauss, 1973, p.72).

An example of the limited nature of standard questionnaires can be found in their utilisation by psychologist Danica Giles's (2011) investigation of pre-performance stresses and the effects of stage-fright: despite receiving '260 in all, of whom 167 were BAPAM patients' (BAPAM, 2011), compared to the total 90,000 performers in the UK, responses accounted for only 0.29% of the total (Giles, 2011, p.8). In addition, from this already limited sample, only 15% of the participants identified themselves as actors (Giles, 2011, p.1). Similarly, Konijn (2000) sent out 526 questionnaires in the Netherlands and Flanders, with the total number of actors in both areas 'an unknown quantity and undoubtedly much larger' (2000, p.115), with 114 actors responding (2000, p.124). In the USA the response was similarly low: Konijn (2000) sent out 2000 questionnaires, despite the registered actors being 'over 35,000' (2000, p.115), with only 227 replying (2000, p.124), a 0.65% of the total. In other words, despite the much larger number that quantitative data can provide compared to face-to-face interviews, both Konijn's (2000) and Giles's (2011) examples are characterised by relatively low participation, suggesting that 'the subject can be termed difficult to study' (Konijn, 2000, p.114). This difficulty was verbalised by one of the recipients of Konijn's (2000) questionnaire:

> while I appreciate the effort in collecting this data, I fail to see how an objective survey like this can provide true insights into the creative process of an actor/artist. Many questions cannot be answered by multiple choice, but need detailed, subjective responses since creativity/acting moments are incredibly complex and not subject to pinning down like a captured butterfly. They are fleeting, layered, highly transitory – wrapped up in the wholeness of one's being. Good luck! (Konijn, 2000, p.114).

This responder's feedback illustrates the complexity of the actors' process, which questionnaires may fail to capture without the benefit of face-to-face interaction, follow-up questions and available time. Anticipating such responses, the semi-structured interview style was preferred, allowing actors to relax into interview sessions, even occasionally meandering

into other areas of their process and experience; a time consuming process, although most interviews were concluded within the hour. This choice provided the opportunity for actors to communicate their process with clarity and depth, offering rare insights on their post-performance pressures, thought process and needs. Although the use of standard questionnaires would have probably attracted a larger number of respondents in absolute numbers compared to face-to-face interviews, the number of responses would have neither represented the majority of performers, nor provided the same level of engagement.

Applied cool-down and subsequent interviews – Chapter 5

In Chapter 5, an additional method is utilised: the practice of the cool-down following a theatre performance. Theatre companies were approached and asked to provide permission for their actors to incorporate cool-down processes following their performances; following this practice, actors would provide their feedback in interview settings. A cool-down process was suggested to actors, the Contemporary Cool-Down, devised for the purposes of this research by the author (see Chapter 5). This practical approach provided valuable insights in regards to the logistical and other challenges the participating actors faced; the only way to do more than conjecture on the potential benefits of the cool-down is to utilise it in professional contexts.

No ethical risks were identified in the conducting of this research. For the interview-only method, actors were approached via email through their agents or third party personal connections. Interviews were conducted in theatres, cafés or cultural centres such as the Barbican Centre, with the exception of Actor 13, which took place at the actor's home premises following their request. Field work was conducted in the theatres the collaborating companies performed at the time. The researcher did not teach the cool-down nor led cool-down sessions in the backstage area, to prevent influencing their responses and to maintain

their agency during this time. The ethics approval form can be located in the appendix of this thesis (p. IV).

Theatre space or workshop environment?

Why wouldn't this research be possible in a workshop form, such as the conducting of the cool-down following an acting workshop? For example, Daniel Meyer-Dinkgräfe (2013) describes a possible way to develop the post-performance consciousness of actors within workshop contexts (2013, pp.137-41) and Erin B. Mee (Mandell, 2017, p.39) has stipulated her intentions in engaging actors in the cool-down within workshop settings. This is because the cool-down within a workshop environment cannot emulate the post-performance stresses actors experience within the context of a live performance (Konijn, 2000, p.163), making appropriate setting an important consideration in research, irrespective of field of study (Weil, 2004, p.65). More particularly, workshop cool-down practice would fail to account for two parameters: a) the resultant exertion from a live theatrical performance, inclusive of its physical/emotional and mental aspects (Brandfonbrener,1992, p.102) and b) the actors' exposure to the audiences' established and habitual interaction with actors during the immediate post-performance phase (Schechner, 2002, p.211), inclusive of the actors' temptation to submit to this informal practice, for the lure that networking opportunities provide (Entertainment Assist, 2016, p.18) and to 'self-reward…allowing themselves something of a treat' (Seton, Maxwell, Szabó 2019, p.140). These parameters can neither be ignored nor replicated in a workshop or training environment.

Furthermore, the choice of conducting the cool-down within the theatre space, is reinforced by Filmer's (2006) and Orzechowicz's (2008) immersive field work research examples, which also correspond to Mast's (1986) principle in researching actors: 'researchers of…artistic occupations have remarked upon the necessity of following their respondents to their far reaches of their natural settings in order to obtain the desired data' (1986, p.13). As

actors are located in the theatre during the immediate post-performance phase, the natural setting pertinent to the cool-down remains the theatre space itself:

> once the researcher has his focus of interest, he must locate a site that contains people and social activity bearing upon that interest; then he must enter the site…watch the people and their activity, listen to the symbolic sounds that make meaningful much of what goes on there, record his experiences, convert his experiences into data, analyse them and validate his new understanding (Schatzman and Strauss, 1973, p.18).

The variety of parameters mentioned here by Schatzman and Strauss (1973) correspond to the theatre actors' environment during the immediate post-performance phase, the theatre space, reducing any study of the cool-down following a training session or a rehearsal an exercise out of context, as rehearsals cannot be compared with performances (Aaron, 1986, p.104); (Konijn, 2000, pp.162-3); (Mitchell, 2009, p.216). Instead, the cool-down is here considered within the theatre, what Schatzman and Strauss (1973) call 'site', taking place immediately following a theatre performance (Chapter 5).

Engagement with training environments

In addition to my engagement with secondary sources, individual actors and theatre companies, another aspect worth considering here is the time-lapse between my conservatoire style training (1989-1993) and contemporary training practice, as: 'actor training changes age by age' (Prior, 2012, p.25). For example, prior to the Austrian movement teacher Litz Pisk joining RADA as a movement teacher in the mid-1930s, the concept and practice of 'movement' was not yet mainstream and actors merely received instruction in 'ballet and deportment' (Hall, 1997). With that in mind, I approached drama schools and academies, colleges and drama departments in universities, requesting the opportunity to discuss warm-up and cool-down approaches taught at their institutions, in the form of an interview or email correspondence. For reasons of ease of access and proximity, I attempted to communicate with several greater London-based training environments, in order to be able to accommodate

meetings and interviews at short notice. The majority of institutions passed on the opportunity to engage with this research, with some exceptions.

One was lecturer Kasia Zaremba-Byrne, from St Mary's University, Twickenham, indicating that the realities of professional theatre productions do not currently accommodate for cool-down practices and that at times even the warm-up is neglected. In an interview on 21 May 2019, Zaremba-Byrne explained that this is especially true in festival environments, such as the Edinburgh Fringe, where actors may need to abruptly and unceremoniously transition from performing on stage to 'leafleting' - a type of street-advertising of the show that includes the handing of leaflets to passers-by, whilst performing snippets of the production advertised – without any real acknowledgment of those transitions.

Another academic was lecturer Leigh Tredger from Regents University, who on 6 of March 2019 kindly invited me to observe a movement class on campus, including a session of Gabrielle Roth's Five Rhythms - a five state (Flowing, Staccato, Chaos, Lyrica, Stillness) physical sequence established by dancer Gabrielle Roth, often used by performers and non-performers (5rhythms, 2020). Following this session, an informal discussion with the students confirmed that they never had received instruction on post-performance cool-down in theory or practice.

Lecturer and costume technician Tina Bicât from St Mary's University, Twickenham, also provided her insights during an interview on 06 June 2019, confirming her awareness of the post-performance issues actors face and the absence of established practices to manage them. She added that at present, only performance companies that incorporate very physical content tend to conduct the cool-down systematically, such as circus performance company Ockham's Razor (Bicât, interview). Moreover, Bicât indicated that these questions are also

related to the limitations of space within the backstage area, echoing Filmer (2006), as well as the logistical support such post-performance processes may require. In addition, Bicât indicated that in her view a cool-down might be particularly useful during the several transitions that take place between matinee and evening performances.

Another faculty member that engaged with this research was R.A.D.A. head of movement teacher Shona Morris, in a zoom interview dated the 19 January 2021:

> we have had some discussions that aren't about what I do but about the actors between classes. And about how the students of ours at the end of an acting class, for there to be a time of cool-down. So that the actors recognise that they go into a place which is quite defragmented and they need to be re-fragmented in some way. And there has been talk about that with, I don't know; meditation techniques and staff like that. I think that starts in the acting class. In terms of the [cool-down after the] performance, nothing, no. Lots of reasons. The shows are in a very, very tight schedule…you need to go out of that space so other people can move into that space (zoom interview).

This response indicates that although there is a 'conversation' on how actors can move from one acting class to the next and make the transition from being fragmented to becoming whole again, a similar consideration has yet to take place for end of year shows. The main reason offered is related to logistics, a 'very, very tight schedule', but it remains remarkable that the conversation for the transition from one class to the next is currently more developed than the lack of transition between performance and immediate socialisation, despite performances being more intense experiences than classes, workshops or rehearsals (Mitchell, 2009). Could the development and establishment of a cool-down from one class to the next, pave the way for the recognition that post-performance stresses deserve at least equal consideration? This remains unclear and at present, what occasionally takes place during the post-performance phase within training environments such as R.A.D.A. is a de-brief of sorts: 'there might be a kind of, you wouldn't call it a cool-down, a coming together of the cast at the end with the tutors and some kind, depending on the tutor, some type of

sitting around in a circle, talking about things or giving notes…but not a cool-down' (Morris, zoom interview).

In a zoom interview dated the 27th of January 2021, actor, director and movement teacher Anna Healey also provided training environment perspectives, through her teaching engagements with Guildhall, Mountview and Central:

> I believe very strongly in the cool-downs and in some of my classes I tell my students that actually, a cool-down is sometimes more vital than a warm-up, which sounds as controversial…after that vigorous physical activity that you need to then make sure that the muscles are back to their normal length, making sure you are heating the body down and so on (zoom interview).

This account confirms the 'controversial' nature of suggesting the cool-down as equally or even more important than the warm-up, to students that normally experience classes and training sessions retaining the warm-up; work; cool-down triptych, as indicated by Saivetz (1998). Even so, this holistic three-part approach remains occasionally compromised because of lack of time: 'as I teach I often feel that there is so much I have to cram in…sometimes, I top and tail with a warm-up and a cool-down, sometimes, I don't do a warm-up at all and sometimes I don't have time for a cool-down, so I am just teaching the body of the work' (Healey, zoom interview). Moreover, time constrains apparent during classes become even more severe during the high pressured rehearsals leading to final show performances:

> when you are doing a dress rehearsal or a tech rehearsal often the estate people are jangling the keys…the caretakers are jangling the keys desperately trying to lock up so often I am trying to desperately trying to sort out something technically and its 'you've got to get out, you've got to get out'…they don't want to be there late and the rehearsal always runs on a bit, so there is a sense of rushing out as they want to close the building (Healey, zoom interview).

This account indicates that training environment face stringent time constraints and financial pressures to generate results, what Healey calls 'the time pressure on the product' (zoom interview). Morris explains: 'I think that essentially theatre is capitalist' (zoom interview), implying that the adoption of regular and systematic cool-down processes may be less

developed because budget priorities are located elsewhere within the artistic overall process, namely the rehearsal and performance.

Notwithstanding the pressures reflected in these accounts - Healey's 'time pressure on the product' and Morris's 'theatre is capitalist' – they should not be used to make premature assumptions about the nature of training environments everywhere, nor conclude that little thought is given to the human element during the creative process. However, when discussing the post-performance phase, not only in terms of process but also of culture, they do provide an indication that training environments may be facing similar pressures later encountered by actors in professional settings, which should be considered in tandem: 'I believe that both contexts (training and workplace) should always be discussed together as they are interdependent on each other' (Seton, 2009, p.65).

Engagement with producers and cultural entities

During this process of engagement, I also approached cultural entities, such as the National Theatre, Spotlight, the Actors Centre, Equity, as well as theatre producers. Lack of extensive networking links and personal connections proved decisive, with requests to conduct interviews or suggest collaborations ignored or turned down. For example, Spotlight refused access to their massive list of actors claiming data protection concerns; the Actor's Centre could not provide availability for a meeting with the management, in order to suggest collaborations within the Tristan Bates theatre; the Actors Equity failed to return emails on two separate occasions, despite my active and full membership as an actor.

When responses were received, they were similar in tone and content. For example, an email response from the National Theatre's New Work department dated 18 June 2019 stated 'we

are unable to help you on this occasion as we are a small and busy team' and adding that the resident director will be notified in case 'he has any thoughts'. Likewise, a request to engage with West End producer Sir Cameron Mackintosh was declined in an email dated 11 June 2019: 'due to receiving so many requests of a similar nature, it is not possible to arrange for Sir Cameron to be interviewed for university projects'. The standard nature of responses received suggests that the entertainment industry (actors, training and professional environments, as well as federations and other agencies) may occasionally be slow to engage with seemingly unknown research, albeit aimed at improving the actors' processes, including the post-performance phase.

Engagement with BAPAM

In a BAPAM lecture I attended at Equity on 30 October 2019, physiotherapist Dr Sarah Upjohn pointed out four main recurring physical concerns for performers: muscles, tendons, ligaments and nerves (BAPAM, lecture). However, this view is in direct contrast to the information actors provided for the benefits of this research, in both Chapters 4 and 5 or found in more comprehensive studies (Entertainment Assist, 2016); (Thomson and Jaque, 2017), as well as indicated by one of the founding presidents of Performing Arts Medicine Association (PAMA), Dr. Brandfonbrener (1992). For example, in terms of physical exertion, only Actor 8 (Chapter 4) provided an example of a musculoskeletal system post-performance need. All other actors highlighted other parameters, including the adrenaline rush, mental self-review and the question of transition from artistic to social contexts as the most important aspects. Moreover, the lecturer admitted unfamiliarity with the warm-up processes of actors (BAPAM, lecture) and failed to make any reference to hormonal changes or the experience of hot states and visceral drives during the post-performance phase.

It is worth noting that this lecture attracted only three actors, myself included; could this indicate that actors have yet to see BAPAM as relevant to their post-performance needs? For example, Thomson and Jaque (2017) confirm that highest rates of physical injury are recorded by musicians and dancers (2017, p.328), not actors. Or does this reluctance to engage merely confirms Brandfonbrener's (1992) assessment 'based on hearsay and occasional personal difficulties, they [actors] may distrust the medical establishment across the board' (1992, p.101)?

Furthermore, Dr Upjohn admitted that 90% of BAPAM clients are musicians, known to have distinct performance needs (Thomson and Jaque, 2017). However, actors also experience distinct physical post-performance needs, for example in relation to vocal projection and diaphragm support (Lugering, 2012), which necessitates controlled eating habits prior to theatre performances (Nakamura, 1990, p.92); (Luckhurst and Veltman, 2001, p.46); (Filmer, 2006, p.125); (Thomson and Jaque, 2017, p.367), resulting in strong post-performance feelings of hunger (Christoffersen, 1993, p.169); - a visceral drive (Loewenstein, 1996); (De Ridder, et al., 2014); (Williams et al., 2016). I left the lecture thinking that in the absence of established cool-down practices taught (training environments) or practiced (professional settings), BAPAM could do more to appreciate the distinct nature of the actors' needs, as well as the particularity of their post-performance exertion. In the next and final introductory chapter, the distinction of the actors' needs is highlighted, along with the definition of terms that will be repeated throughout this thesis, to better accommodate the specific context of this discourse.

D. Definitions

In this introductory section, the terms 'actor', 'theatre', 'Euro-American and Eastern practices', 'post-performance and social-performance', are identified as key definitions, conceptualising the approach taken and better locating the area of research. For example, the term 'actor' distinguishes between amateur and professional actors; would the cool-down be considered for both? The term 'theatre' acknowledges the variety of performance mediums that actors engage with; for example, why not also consider a cool-down following a 12 hour working day on a TV or film set? Another term used throughout is 'Euro-American' (Schechner, 1983), meant to restrict the area examined within a specific performance tradition and viewed in juxtaposition with 'Eastern practices'. Likewise, the term 'post-performance' refers to stresses emanating from theatre performances; not rehearsals or workshops. Finally, the term 'social performance' refers to the immediate post-performance challenges of socialisation, rather than other unrelated social commitments.

Actor

This refers to the work of the adult (male or female) professional actor, working in the Euro-American tradition, where 'the actor begins to learn his profession too late, when he is already physically formed' (Grotowski, 1968, p.50); with Prior (2012) confirming the difference between the teaching of adults and children as significant in performance (2012, p.210). In contrast, Eastern performance practitioners are predominantly males - with exceptions, such as the Balinese *Sanghyang Dedari*, where young girls are trained in trance techniques 'every night, for weeks' (Covarrubias, 2006, p.335) – beginning their training at

an early age; in Kabuki on 'the sixth day of the sixth month of one's sixth year' (Nakamura, 1990, p.48) and in Noh 'one may begin at seven' (Zeami, 1984, p.4).

Also, amateur actors are distinguished from professional ones (Robb, 2017, p.247), because although they also experience significant psychophysical activation (Taylor, 2016, p.108) they perform occasionally: 'amateur theatrical productions accommodate unsustainable practices because they don't have to do it tomorrow' (Filmer, 2006, p.131). In contrast, professional theatre performances represent prolonged and consecutive intense experiences, which determine professional outcomes and where the actors' financial and artistic objectives are interlinked and constantly at stake (Entertainment Assist, 2016, pp.167-70).

Theatre

Why would this research not investigate exertion experienced following prolonged work in voice overs, TV or film making and only particularise its focus on the post-performance needs for actors following a theatre performance? This is because the actor's work in the theatre is essentially different from recorded studio work (Szlawieniec-Haw, 2020, p.16); (Murphy and Orlick, 2006, p.118). During a theatre performance the actor has no opportunity to stop and re-start but only to course-correct; in contrast, TV and film actors have no live audience - with exceptions (Mast, 1986, p.93); (VanDerWerff, 2011) - perform out of sequence and in a variety of locations, and as a rule experience significant waiting times between their filmed performances, ranging from a few hours to a few days (Bates, 1986, pp.44-5). For example, Mast (1986) points out that 'whereas in theatre, actors carry through a performance from beginning to end, following the sequence as scripted and without disjunctions in action, in television they submit their performance to the fragmenting requirements of the organisation's method of production' (1986, p.92). Likewise, theatre

maker Gao Xingjian understands the acting process in theatre as distinct from other forms, such as film and TV, because of the co-existence of audiences and actors:

> the essential difference between the theatre and the cinema or television is that it enables actors and the audience to establish direct contact while retaining their awareness of being in the theatre, and they have no need to identify themselves with the characters. The actors are there to display the process of acting, while the audience is intendent to observe the process (Labędzka, 2008, p.43).

In other words, even though TV and film acting may seem similar with theatre acting in terms of process, they are very different in their making and appreciating; theatre involves a two-way relationship between audience and actors, whereas film is one-way and TV viewing is often a private affair (Bennett, 1997, p.84).

Euro-American and Eastern practices

The term Euro-American refers to theatrical processes as distinct from Eastern performance traditions. For example, *Noh* and *Kabuki* actors specialise in mastering a particular codified acting style, whereas Euro-American actors may be trained in a variety of acting techniques, such as the Stanislavski's System, the Meisner Technique, *Commedia dell'Arte*, Meyerhold's Biomechanics (Odom, 2017, p.16), the 'techniques/legacies of Grotowski, Michael Chekhov' (Zarrilli, Sasitharan and Kapur, 2016, p.337) or none of the above (Luckhurst and Veltman, 2001). In contrast, actors in Eastern traditions train in one system, specialise in particular types of roles and expect a specific role progression throughout their professional lives 'as in Ramlila…as in Noh' (Schechner, 1985, p.19).

Notwithstanding this juxtaposition, how do we define the term 'Euro-American' theatrical tradition? This is a period that begins with ancient Greek theatre (Schechner, 2002, p.31) and 'the oldest surviving play in Western theatrical drama', *The Persians* by Aeschylus (Billington, 2016, p.17). These first theatrical beginnings, as well as Aristotle's critical

analysis of tragedy (‘mimesis, praxis and catharsis’), constitute the foundational concepts and practices of the Euro-American tradition (Schechner, 2002, p.102). However, the Euro-American theatrical tradition begins to resemble its current form in the 19th century, with the works of Ibsen, Chekhov and the establishment of the Moscow Arts Theatre (Schechner, 2002, pp.149-52). Until then and including the 18th century, ‘a dozen basic emotions were expressed using standardised techniques for presentation; all actors used these and all spectators understood them…the same techniques of classical oratory [that] were applied in salons, the parliament, the law courts or at ceremonies’ (Konijn, 2000, p.26). Classical oratory rules, however, could not begin to express the complexity of the new writing developing during that time and this way of making theatre was gradually challenged by ‘Otto Brahm, Jacques Copeau, Georg Fuchts, August Strindberg and André Antoine’, influenced by the introduction of Greek Theatre, as well as the style of naturalism (Swain, 2011, pp.9-10). These developments necessitated the replacement of ‘eclectic’ training ‘born out of the long history of actor apprenticeship’, with ‘notions of systematic training’ (Prior, 2012, p.25) and more complex styles of performing (Booth, 1991); (Cohen, 2004), which brought about the gradual introduction and establishment of the theatre director - ‘a relatively recent development’ (Unwin, 2004, p.10).

Nowadays, in the Euro-American tradition, there are numerous approaches to making theatre, broadly categorised in three styles: the style of involvement, expressed by Stanislavski, Meisner, Strasberg, Hagen, Chubbuck; the style of detachment, utilised by theatre makers such as Brecht, Meyerhold, Boal; and the style of self-expression, as developed by Grotowski, Barba, Brook (Konijn, 2000, pp.36-44). In parallel development with the new acting techniques that constantly adapt to the new writing and devising of performance, a variety of new approaches have become established with the purpose of a holistic training for

the actor, such as Bogart's Viewpoints, and Sellers's Young Acting Somatics (Barton, 2003, pp. 278-87), with new approaches constantly being developed (Callery, 2001, p.13).

This thesis also acknowledges the Eastern performing tradition, juxtaposed to the Euro-American, as pertinent in the cool-down discourse (Chapter 3). This is because some Eastern performing styles, in addition to their often very extensive and elaborate warm-up processes (Schechner, 1983, p.222), also incorporate the cool-down in one way or another (Schechner, 1985, p.18); (Mandell, 2017); (Watanabe, 1991, p.195); (Bell, 1997, p.165), whereas in the Euro-American tradition similar cool-down provision is absent (Schechner, 1985); (Mandell, 2017). The observation that the cool-down is established within some Eastern performing traditions but not within any Euro-American ones, leads to an interrelated question: would actors working in Euro-American methods benefit from the direct application or suitable adaptation of Eastern cool-down approaches? This question will be considered in Chapter 3.

Post-performance and social performance

The cool-down is considered in relation to the immediate post-performance stresses and not broader concerns such as, the intensity of contemporary 24/7 living (Kalabria, 2017), insights on drug dependency (Weil, 2004), anxiety formed by the lack of clear career progression (Mast, 1986, p.134); (Cloonan, 2008); (Simkins, 2009; 2019); (Thomson and Jaque, 2017, p.325), the appreciation of body/brain spectrum transitions throughout the day (Gelernter, 2016) or the importance of sleep cycles during the night (Littlehales, 2016) to improve health and quality of life. This is because despite the breadth of generic health advice available, what Kalabria calls a 'wellness boom' (2017), there is little specialist and systematic training available for actors in regards to their immediate post-performance phase. In contrast, cool-down practice in workshops, rehearsals or training is relatively standard with theatre makers

and educators (Bloch, 1993). For example, workshop settings normally incorporate a warm-up, followed by the main section of the workshop, followed by a cool-down, such as the one described by Saivetz (1998), in reference to director JoAnne Akalaitis's workshop process (1998, pp.149-50). Similarly, Kurtz (2011) lists a number of cool-down processes practiced by educators within training environments and class settings (2011, pp.39-45).

Despite the interlinked physical, emotional and mental exertion the actor faces following a theatre performance, there is another pertinent aspect in relation to the cool-down: the actor's social interaction immediately following the artistic performance. This is because, as Mast (1986) points out, actors' professional careers may to some degree be related to the success of those social interactions, which she calls 'non-dramatic impression management':

> actors are responsible for presenting themselves favourably to those with the power to give them work. Given the characteristic uncertainty of the occupation – the reliance on chance or absence of clearly defined steps to be taken towards the goal – and given that the very substance of the work is self-presentation, non-dramatic impression management is given extraordinary weight in making career outcomes (1986, p.136).

In other words, self-presentation is at the core of the acting profession, not only artistically and on-stage but also socially and off-stage (Goffman, 1959), thus linking the actors' public image with their future employability; especially as their social mask is utilised during their immediate post-performance phase, which may require additional preparation and consideration (Hagen, 1973, p.25). For example, Mast (1986) notes how actors develop their professional socialisation at drama school (1986, p.26) and Schechner (2002) indicates that this immediate post-performance social performing becomes normalised, even backstage:

> often a dressing room just after the curtain comes down is relatively quiet. It takes a little bit of time to come back to oneself. When friends invade the dressing room too soon they can feel the actors' tension between wanting to be hospitable and wanting to be alone for a little while (2002, p.211).

In addition to the friends' invasion into the dressing room, most actors then engage in further social performing, including what Schechner (1985) calls 'after-the-theatre-bouts', where actors eat, drink and socialise with colleagues, audiences, agents, casting directors, producers

and other actors, in 'exuberant sociality' (1985, p.19). Similarly, Orzechowicz (2008) confirms the contrast experienced by actors between artistic and social performance:

> how actors manage emotions offstage as they negotiate their professional relationships may look different than the feeling management they do onstage, lacking the structural support they receive during a show. Further research should explore actors' on- and off-stage emotion man-management and consider how actors' privileged status is contingent on social setting (2008, p.154).

In this study, Orzechowicz (2008) points out three interrelated issues. First, that there is an obvious contrast between artistic and social performance, because in the social context actors no longer have the artistic performance's structural support, which incorporates a) theatre's division of labour, b) the rehearsal process, and c) formal training (Orzechowicz, 2008, p.146). Second, that as a result of the absence of off-stage support, the actors' privileged status on-stage is not guaranteed equally off-stage, but can be seen as ambivalent and dependant on the types of social interactions that may follow. Third, that there is little sociological research on the subject (Orzechowicz, 2008, p.144).

In short, the management of immediate post-performance social interactions – which are largely unavoidable - become an important consideration, if they are to be perceived as contributing to positive career outcomes (Mast, 1986, p.128). Consequently, the development of a conscious cool-down approach will allow actors to daily alleviate physical/emotional exertion produced on-stage, as well as prepare them for their immediate post-performance social interactions. These concerns are pertinent, as they are linked with desirable professional objectives, such as the promotion of a positive and thriving professional self-image, aiming at regular employment (Mast, 1986, pp.136-7).

Despite the obvious importance of both dramatic and non-dramatic impression management, actors are trained only in the former, not the latter; although Barton (2003) argues that 'everyone acts almost all the time…we're learning to act throughout our lives…this is what

we do to survive' (2003, p.1), referring to social role play and echoing Erving Goffman's seminal book *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959). However, it is important to make a distinction between social role play and artistic constructs – Goffman (1959) admits: 'an action staged in a theatre is a relatively contrived illusion and an admitted one; unlike ordinary life, nothing real or actual can happen to the performed characters' (1959, p.246). To use Goffman's model, the systematic absence of the cool-down following the actor's work as a 'performed character', over time leaves the actor performing that character exposed to 'real or actual' harm. Preventing it requires actors conducting a conscious transition, in order to return to 'ordinary life', to manage their performance exertion and prepare for the demands of immediate post-performance socialisation, encapsulated in Mast's (1986) 'non-dramatic impression management' concept. More particularly, a systematic cool-down process is necessary, because actors require developing 'a soaring imagination without losing control of reality' (Hagen, 1991, p.xiii) - also noted by Taylor (2016, pp.194-5) - whilst 'it is difficult for some actors to separate the professional from the personal' (Luckhurst and Veltman, 2001, p.114), suggesting that the accomplishment of these transitions is neither easy nor natural. As an additional note, social performance examined in this thesis is not in reference to commercial obligations, such as professional interviews, publicity and promotional events for theatrical productions or award ceremonies. These do not take place immediately following theatre performances and will not be considered for the purposes of this thesis.

Chapter structure

This introduction was divided in four preliminary chapters (A, B, C and D). A presented the main aspects pertinent to the question of the cool-down, B introduced the researcher, C considered the methods and methodology, and D discussed the definitions and related terminology used throughout this thesis.

Chapter 1 reviews the literature and Chapter 2 examines the available secondary sources in greater detail, whilst focusing on the particularity of the actor's post-performance needs. Chapter 3 discusses Eastern cool-down approaches and entertains the possibility of their utilisation within Euro-American post-performance contexts. Chapter 4 highlights current post-performance attitudes, as those are reflected from interviews conducted with 16 actors working in Austria, Germany, Greece, the UK and the USA. Chapter 5 documents the application of the Contemporary Cool-Down, a process devised by the author for the purposes of this thesis, whereby actors conduct the cool-down in a systematic way following theatre performances and provide their insights within interview settings. Chapter 6 concludes, whilst looking forward to the further development of this research.

1. Literature review

Introduction

In this chapter, I will discuss 3 different groups of secondary sources relating to the actors' exertion, emanating from 3 distinct standpoints. The first, discusses eight practical cool-down protocols, the second reiterates the gap in training, stopping short of any practical proposals, whilst discussing the challenges (social and psychological) relating to the actors' professionalization. The third group consists of literature related to the actors' processes focusing on different phases, such as, training, workshop and the warm-up. In the first two groups (practical cool-down approaches and professionalization) the literature will be displayed chronologically, providing the reader with an understanding of how it has progressively developed over time and in which direction. The third group follows Schechner's (1985) seven-part performance sequence as a framework.

First group

The first group of secondary sources, discuses practical methods that have or could be used as a post-performance cool-down, such as Schechner's post-performance approach of 'some quiet talking about the performance' (1985, p.19); the 'step-out' procedure (Bloch, 1993, p.128); Saivetz's description of JoAnne Akalaitis's cool-down (1998, pp.149-50); Wangh's 4-step 'warming down' (2000, p.255); Kurtz's 'journaling' within training post-performance contexts (2011, p.3); the 'consciousness' approach (Meyer-Dinkgräfe, 2013, pp.137-41); Mee's cool-down inspired from Yoga (Mandell, 2017, p.42) and the Dance Movement Therapy (DMT) for emotion regulation (Wolf, 2018). Researchers in this group incorporate the post-performance cool-down as a significant concern, whilst devising processes to be utilised by actors during this phase.

Second group

The second group includes literature highlighting a number of stresses, including the absence of the cool down (Geer, 1993); (Burgoyne, Poulin and Rearden, 1999); (Seton, 2008; 2009); (Maxwell, Seton and Szabó, 2015); (Taylor, 2016); (Seton, Maxwell and Szabó, 2019). This group also includes studies that explore psychological perspectives, such as stage-fright (Aaron, 1986); (Steptoe et al., 1995); (Giles, 2011), the actors' cognitive processes (Noice and Noice, 1997; 2002), the manifestation of emotion during performance (Konijn, 2000), the vulnerability of actors due to the manipulation of emotion (Cloonan, 2008); (Hetzler, 2008); (Thomson and Jaque, 2012); (Robb, 2017); (Wigmore, 2018), methods to warm-up and treat trauma, such as the Nadine George Technique (NGT) and the Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing (EMDR) technique (www.emdr.com), taught in tandem at the Centre for Voice in Performance at The Royal Scottish Academy of Music & Drama (Jones, 2014), and studies related to drama therapy (Scheiffele, 2001); (Arias, 2019); (Panero, 2019). I also include a study by a theatre practitioner in this section, related to the exertion actors experience when regularly embodying 'human suffering, distress and violence' (Szlawieniec-Haw, 2020, p.1), because of its relevance and direct juxtaposition to some of the literature discussed in this group.

Third group

The third group of secondary sources is examined from the actors' and other theatre makers' standpoint, pertinent to their process from a practical perspective. It includes actors' personal accounts (Luckhurst and Veltman, 2001); (Zucker, 2002), actor-trainers' viewpoints (Barker, 1977); (Meisner and Longwell, 1987); (Hagen, 1973; 1991); (Oida, 1992); (Lugering, 2012) and the directors' perspective, (Grotowski, 1968); (Brook, [1968] 1972); (Swain, 2011); (Unwin, 2014); (Cynkutis, 2015). This group is presented within the framework of Schechner's (1985) seven-part performance sequence, contextualising the actors' overall process and reiterating the lack of development of the cool-down phase.

1. *Practical cool-down approaches*

Schechner (1985)

Schechner (1985) mentions that with The Performance Group (TPG) he practiced post-performance 'gentle discussions in relation to the performance and group breathing' (1985, pp.18-9), whilst his recent position on the cool-down is this:

> I use cooldowns just as I use warmups…It's more difficult, however, because after performing, performers are eager to meet friends—there is always a rush to get out of the theatre. People want to close up shop…[it] makes sense, to move from an intense process in an orderly way—just as it makes sense to move into an intense process in an orderly way. That is, if warmups make sense, then cooldowns do too (Mandell, 2017, p.42).

This excerpt indicates that in the absence of post-performance training for actors, the culturally engrained attitudes prevent the 'move from an intense process in an orderly way', allowing immediate post-performance socialisation to become the default position.

Bloch (1993)

Bloch's (1993) research culminated to Alba Emoting, a technique for the generation and control of the six basic emotions 'joy, anger, fear, sadness, erotic-love, and tenderness' to be utilised by actors and non-actors (Baker, 2008, p.21), which has been under development since the 1970s (Geer, 1993, p.151). In response to emotions lingering-on following her sessions (Baker, 2008, p.26), Bloch developed her 'step-out' approach - whereby actors complete several deep breaths in a standing position (1993, pp.128-9), with eyes open and an alert state, massaging the face - to assist actors returning to what Bloch calls 'a neutral state' (1993, p.128). Barton (2003) provides a detailed description of this process (2003, pp.271-2):

Stepping Out

1. Stand very tall, keeping your eyes lifted and focused out toward an imaginary horizon. Do not allow your gaze to drop down.

2. Take three deep, slow breaths. As you inhale through the nose, lace your fingers together in front of you, and with as little muscular tension in your arms as possible, lift your elbows

up and bring your hands behind your head to the back of your neck. As you exhale through the mouth, return your hands forward and down and let them flop at your sides.

3. Shake out your appendages.

4. Wipe and massage your face with your hands, relaxing all facial muscles as you do so.

5. Stretch with arms extended and legs wide.

Repeat this pattern several times as needed.

Saivetz (1998)

Performance theorist Deborah Saivetz (1998) describes theatre director JoAnne Akalaitis's cool-down process, with breathing exercises and a visualisation of the body as central in the actors' decompression:

> in the first of these exercises, the actors lie on their backs with their eyes closed and their arms and legs extended. If individuals experience any lower back pain, they may bend their knees and put the soles of their feet flat on the floor. The actors focus on their breath, inhaling through the nose and exhaling through the mouth … In the second cool-down exercise, the actors stand in a relaxed posture with eyes closed and feet planted firmly on the floor, shoulder-width apart, in parallel position. The knees are unlocked, the pelvis is slightly tucked, the shoulders are relaxed with the arms hanging loosely by the actor's side, and the head is resting on the neck in an aligned and alert position. Akalaitis suggests that the actors visualize a pole, perpendicular to the ground, that passes through the top of the head, down through the centre of the body, and emerges out from between the legs. The actors concentrate on breathing through the nose into a place in the middle of the stomach. After a few minutes of breathing, Akalaitis asks the actors to "think about what you just did, but don't think too hard. Think about whether this means anything to you" (1998, pp.149-50).

It is worth noting that the two cool-down processes described here take place following 'physical sessions' (Saivetz, 1998, p.149), not theatre performances; also confirmed by Saivetz via email communication dated 1 March 2019.

Wangh (2000)

Actor trainer Stephen Wangh, inspired by the laboratory work of Jerzy Grotowski, provides a physical approach to acting methodology, including a post-rehearsal 'warming down'. Although, much like the process described by Saivetz (1998), this 'warming down' is

considered following workshops or rehearsals, it is included in this list, due to its potential transferability during the post-performance phase:

> 1. Take some time to sense how you feel and what energies and thoughts are pouring through your mind and body. Stay alone for a couple of minutes. 2. Let yourself think about the acting experience you have just had. Allow yourself to have all the thoughts and opinions you are having. 3. Shake any excess energy you feel. Run, yell, do whatever you need to do to help the character exit from your body and to recognise yourself as you. 4.Think about where you must go after rehearsal, whom you will have to see, what character you need to put on to face the performance called real life (2000, p.255).

Although Wangh's (2000) four-step warming down could be valuable during the post-performance phase, he proposes its use 'after rehearsal' (2000, p.255).

Kurtz (2011)

This master's dissertation acknowledges the emerging discourse dealing with post-performance exertion, reflected by Schechner (1985), Geer (1993) and Seton (2008; 2009), highlighting the absence of the cool-down during the post-performance phase as a primary concern. However, this research's main strength lies in its practical focus, in attempting the implementation of the cool-down with two student theatre productions (2011, p.3).

Kurtz (2011) uses 'journaling' as the main cool-down method, where actors are writing their immediate post-rehearsal and post-performance thoughts; a process led by the director in the backstage area (2011, pp.22-3). Kurtz (2011) also utilises another protocol: that of the 'cell phone bag', where actors are required to part with their mobile phones for the duration of the rehearsal or performance (2011, p.26). In addition to her own methods, Kurtz (2011) mentions 6 approaches developed by others:

a) The use of rituals that could be used consistently to signify the beginning and end of sessions, such as the singing of chimes, utilised by Janet Rodgers, Head of Performance and Voice and Speech at Virginia Commonwealth University (Kurtz, 2011, pp.39-40).

b) ‘Introductions’, devised by Josh Chenard, Assistant Professor at Virginia Commonwealth University: ‘at the beginning of rehearsal the actors walk around the space. They begin to interact with each other as their characters, introducing themselves by their character’s name. At the end of the rehearsal, the actors once again walk around the space; this time they introduce themselves by their own names, not their characters’ names’ (Kurtz, 2011, p.42).

c) ‘Journey back to self’, devised by Lionel Walsh, Director of the School of Dramatic Art in Windsor, ON, Canada (Kurtz, 2011, p.42), describes the coaching of acting students following the end of a session.

d) ‘The veil’: ‘you imagine that there is a veil that is draped over you and hangs all the way down to the floor. This is the veil of the character or of the play. The actor walks off the stage and as s/he steps into the wings, he reaches down to the ground and lifts the imaginary veil up over her/his head and releasing it as he walks forward out of the veil’ (Kurtz, 2011, p.45).

e) ‘The mask’: ‘the actor can think of the make-up application process as building a character mask. Before leaving the theatre and before mingling with family and friends after the show, the actor can consciously remove that mask, focusing on the removal of character as she does so’ (Kurtz, 2011, p.45).

f) ‘The chair’ co-devised by teacher, actor, and director Flloyd Kennedy and drama therapist Andrew Dawson:

> the exercise requires two chairs, side by side, in the middle of the floor. Each actor takes a turn at sitting first in one chair to express: “this is what I have in common with my character”, then in the other chair to express “This is where I am different from my character”. Then they would return to the first chair to say “This is what I want to take out of this room from today's work”, followed by, “This is what I am going to leave in this room, so that I can work on it when I return” (Kurtz, 2011, pp.43-4).

Meyer-Dinkgräfe (2013)

Performance theorist Daniel Meyer-Dinkgräfe (2013) proposes two approaches during the post-performance phase. He names the first approach 'a hypothesis', yet to be tested in practice:

> for actors whose emotional balance is disturbed due to the activities of their profession, i.e., taking on the emotions of a character in rehearsal or performance, listening to a recital of Rig Veda, or engaging in such recital themselves, will restore balance from the most subtle, and therefore most efficient, level of pure consciousness (2013, p.137).

Meyer-Dinkgräfe's (2013) second proposal is a series of exercises meant to quicker compartmentalise different time-concepts, conducted in four-stages within a workshop environment, where actors learn to describe their own activities in each concept of time (past, present, future). This approach is meant to help actors within post-performance contexts to 'observe what is happening within them, emotions, feelings and thoughts, physical sensations, to serve as cool-down' (Meyer-Dinkgräfe, 2013, pp.137-141).

Mee (Mandell, 2017)

Mee presents the imbalance between the warm-up and the cool-down in terms of absence of training: 'if you are afraid you may never be able to get out of character, or let go of the character, you may resist getting fully into character. I think we do our actors a disservice if we don't train them to cool down as much as we train them to warm up' (Mandell, 2017, p.39). In response to this systemic imbalance and influenced by Eastern cool-down practices encountered in Kerala, India, in 1991:

> [Mee] developed exercises, many derived from yoga, to give the actors and student-actors she directs "a way of re-becoming themselves that does not depend on alcohol and cigarettes." The exercises have names like the Sun Salutation, the Silent Disco ("free dancing to music of the actor's choice"), and Laughter Yoga (a forced laugh, done in pairs, that becomes a real one) (Mandell, 2017, p.42).

Although there is no record of the systematic use of the cool-down from Mee (for example, on how many performances it has been applied or to what effect), she remains one of the few theatre makers and theorists to highlight this gap in the actors' post-performance practice: 'in

Stanislavsky's writing, there's a great deal of attention to becoming the character…but there's no attention to becoming yourself again' (Mandell, 2017, p.41).

Wolf (2018)

Wolf develops and proposes the Offstage Equilibrium Program. Its objectives are as follows:

> the intended result of the program is to decrease the prevalence of emotional dysregulation disorders in populations of actors, such as anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, and dissociative disorders. Decreasing the frequency and intensity of these mental health challenges could improve actor quality of life and the sustainability of a career in the arts (Wolf, 2018, p.34).

This program requires a leader to run it: 'a dance movement therapist who has additional training in acting or acting pedagogy to implement it. This dual credential is necessary because the program relies heavily on knowledge of Laban Movement Analysis, dance/movement therapy theory' (2018, p.37).

Discussion of the eight cool-down approaches

From the eight processes discussed, three appear more suitable in terms of purpose and post-performance context: Bloch's 'step-out' (1993), Akalaitis's 'cool-down' (Saivetz, 1998) and Wangh's 'warming down' (Wangh, 2000). However, in this section I will provide my response to all approaches, in order of preference.

Bloch

The 'step-out' is meant to regulate breathing, which in turn slows down the heart rate (Baker, 2008, p.26) and relaxes the actor thorough the onset of awareness: 'a relaxed yet alert state…in the ''step-out'' technique, the person is standing up and with his or her eyes open. The goal is to be aware of one's environment, as opposed to looking inward' (Kalawski, 2011, p.183). This approach has the benefit of simplicity: instructions to change the role-specific posture into a neutral position, remain still, keep one's eyes open, whilst taking at least 3 deep breaths, require limited training and minimal space and time to conduct. Although the technique can only be taught by certified teachers and all teachers are personally certified by Dr Susana Bloch (Baker, 2008, p.117), once the 'step-out' is mastered

it does not require a certified trainer to oversee this process, allowing actors to conduct it without a team leader (Kalawski, 2011, p.182).

Although critics argue that 'the step-out' is based on 'outmoded' research premises (Konijn, 2000, p.107) or that it is 'only partially effective' (Geer, 1993, p.153), the positive attributes of the 'step-out' are reiterated by several academics and practitioners (Baker, 2008); (Kalawski, 2011); (Sacay-Bagwell, 2013), including Barton (2003): 'the reason Stepping Out works so well…is that none of the actions in the exercise are those of primary emotions…so the motions of Stepping Out break the connection. This exercise is also a good one to use at the end of a rehearsal or performance, to leave the feelings of the show behind' (2003, p.272).

Saivetz

Akalaitis's two versions of a 'cool-down at the end of the physical session' described by Saivetz (1998) are valuable, because both processes incorporate stillness, breath control, visualisation, the use of the floor to rest the body and self-review of the physical actions that took place prior to the cool-down – all elements familiar to actors from movement sessions taught at training environments. As a result, either cool-down could be used systematically, without the need for further training or the assistance of a moderator. Also, both processes are relatively calm, providing an appropriate counterpoint to the intensity of the warm-up and the performance itself, accommodating the transition to social or private demands.

Wangh

Even though the four point 'warming down' proposed by Wangh (2000) is suggested as a post-rehearsal process, it would also be beneficial following performances, because it takes account of mental and physical tensions (point 1 and 2). Importantly, this process also considers the meaning of transitions (point 4), when the actor needs to 'think about where you must go after rehearsal, whom you will have to see, what character you need to put on to face the performance called real life' (2000, p.255), effectively attempting a smooth and

ordered transition from artistic to social concerns. However, point 3 ‘shake out any excess energy you feel. Run, yell, do whatever you need to do to help the character exit from your body and to recognise yourself as you’ may be problematic, not in the intention of the transition from role to self, but in the intensity of the instructions. This is because following a theatre performance actors are rarely physically inclined to add to their already depleted energy resources with a cool-down that would be intensive in any way. Also, instructions to ‘run’ and ‘yell’ seem unrealistic for three additional reasons: a) the limited space available in the backstage area and dressing room, b) the audience is still present, albeit slowly departing from the auditorium, and c) some actors may require a calm environment during this phase. Although these instructions would work well at the end of a long workshop, class or rehearsal, with a slight modification of point 3, they could also be highly suitable following a theatre performance.

Kurtz

Kurtz’s (2011) ‘journaling’ was fully implemented only during the first production, where the cast was comprised of only 5 actors; 4 returned their completed journals to Kurtz (2011, pp.22-3). Upon directing a much larger cast (of 17 actors), the implementation of the cool-down did not materialise as planned (2011, pp.32-3). This could reflect a clash between the time constraints of rehearsals, the pressures of live performance and the presentation of new information; the cool-down as a process less than embedded within the actors’ training. Instead, the gradual and systematic exposure to cool-down processes throughout the actors training can make cool-down implementation more effective, withstanding high pressured performance settings.

Kurtz’s second post-performance approach, the ‘cell phone bag’ proved useful in two ways: first, actors were not distracted during their rehearsal or performance, providing continuity of focus in the work. Second, the return of the actors’ phones at the end of the

rehearsal/performance, assisted in the transition from the artistic concerns of the role to their own professional and private ones: 'receiving the cell phones at the end of rehearsal, in my opinion, facilitated the transition from the acting space back to everyday lives. The actors seemed eager to turn on their cell phones in order to see what calls and text messages they had missed' (2011, p.26). In other words, this approach accommodates a fast transition from any lingering emotions to the demands of everyday interactions, directly assisting actors in changing their mental focus, from artistic to social.

Kurtz (2011) also provides information on six additional processes developed by academics and practitioners (2011, pp.22-5). However, Rodgers' singing of 'chimes', Chenard's 'introductions', Walsh's 'awareness walk', as well as 'the veil' and 'the mask' are all utilised following 'sessions' or 'rehearsals' (Kurtz, 2011, pp.41-5); not within immediate post-performance settings. Equally, the 'chair' seems more suited to training environments (Kurtz, 2011, p.42), where trainee actors first encounter the challenges of regular transitions between themselves and the role (Szlawieniec-Haw, 2020, pp.42-3), rather than in professional settings with actors more familiar with the nature and management of those transitions (Mast, 1986, p.176). Another parameter worth considering, is that those six processes require a leader to run them: for example, in the chimes cool-down 'the instructor sounds three chimes' (Kurtz, 2011, p.40), whilst the 'chair' cool-down also requires a moderator; this is in contrast with the autonomy and agency actors expect in the backstage area, during both the pre and post-performance phases.

Wolf

Wolf's Offstage Equilibrium Program requires an introductory 30 hours training (2018, p.34); in other words, this training is substantial, specialised and may be unknown to many working actors. Also, there is a requirement for a leader to run it, assuming the dual capacity of a dance/Laban movement therapist with experience as an actor trainer (Wolf, 2018, p.37).

Not only the hiring of such a highly specialised individual may prove difficult or expensive for many theatre groups, professional actors are used to the conducting of their warm-up in highly personalised ways and without supervision. It is not unreasonable that they may expect similar agency during the conducting of their cool-down.

Moreover, in Wolf's approach, there are three additional concerns that need to be raised; the first is related to space availability in conducting Laban movements. This is because many theatres do not have significant backstage space available or alternative available rooms within the same building (Filmer, 2006); with the exception of organisations such as the Royal Shakespeare Company (Seton, 2009, p.35). Second, it is unclear how physically intensive Wolf's Offstage Equilibrium Program' really is but as it is based in Laban and 'Dance Movement Therapy' some level of physical intensity is implied. If so, it is unlikely that all actors would adhere to a post-performance process that is physically intensive, because of the considerable exertion of the performance itself. Third, Wolf (2018) states that Dance Movement Therapy is 'a form of psychotherapy that uses movement to increase emotional and cognitive functioning in an individual' (2018, p.6); however, the requirement for physical and mental recuperation during the immediate post-performance phase is not the same as the requirement for therapy.

For example Kaplan (1969), one of the first to investigate the question of the actors' stage-fright, identified it 'rather as a creative problem the performing artist attempts to solve along with other problems of artistic performance…I hope to find a perspective for stage-fright beyond the clinical, where the phenomenon mainly resides, and to suggest what it contributes performance' (1969, p.60). Similarly, Szlawieniec-Haw's (2020) points out that actors require processes 'that allow for openness, connection, respect, attention, and care without undermining the work or allowing it to slip into therapy' (2020, p.122). Instead, post-

performance exertion should be anticipated, as a natural by-product of pre-performance and performance exertion, neither implying illness nor the necessity for therapy. In this way, the cool-down merely represents a process that acknowledges and attempts to meet the actors' needs, whilst accommodating their transitions from one state to the next.

Meyer-Dinkgräfe

Meyer-Dinkgräfe's (2013) cool-down consciousness approach incorporates two routes. The first, utilises a workshop towards the awareness and cultivation of the distinction between time concepts such as the past, present and future (2013, pp.137-41). It is unclear whether this approach would be in itself enough to accommodate the transition towards becoming 'a less "marked" being of everyday life' (Seton, Maxwell and Szabó, 2019, p.128) or the transition towards the private domain, where actors are often 'having to simply jump into parenting' (Szlawieniec-Haw, 2020, p.52). In an email communication 17 October 2019, Meyer-Dinkgräfe confirmed that 'I am not aware of anyone having taken up my suggestions for cool-down in their practice' (Meyer-Dinkgräfe, email). In my experience and in relation to the feedback received (Chapter 4); (Chapter 5), I argue that actors are not lacking in their ability to make time distinctions (past, present, future). Instead, the absence of cool-down training renders actors unable to recognise and meet their immediate post-performance exertion, having neither the confidence nor the agency to prioritise their needs over and above those of the audience during this phase.

Second, Meyer-Dinkgräfe (2013) proposes actors listen or participate in recitals of *Rig Veda*, referring to a collection of Vedic Sanskrit hymns (Meyer-Dinkgräfe, 2013, p.137). It is unclear whether actors working in the Euro-American tradition would find traditional Hinduist music effective, unfamiliar, or perceive 'the sounds of Rig Veda and the gaps between those sounds, as pure consciousness' (2013, p.136). Also, questions related to

duration of this cool-down and whether a team leader requires leading this session require further clarification.

Mee

Mee's post-performance cool-down includes Yoga influenced exercises, such as 'the Sun Salutation…and Laughter Yoga' (Mandell, 2017, p.42), however, some exercises are done in pairs and this could prove challenging for those actors looking for moments of silence or solitude during this phase. Moreover, the intensity of these exercises is unclear; would older or less agile actors be willing (or able) to participate in a physically intensive cool-down process, in addition to the energy expended during the performance? Mee's lack of record on the utility, regularity and application of those exercises leaves these questions unanswered (Mandell, 2017).

Schechner

Schechner (1985) does not offer a specific format into the cool-down process itself, but only that it would make sense to conduct one, in terms of principle and in similar function to the utility of the warm-up (Mandell, 2017). Beyond 'gentle discussions in relation to the performance and group breathing' (Schechner, 1985, pp.18-9), we have no more information on the nature and regularity of this cool-down, neither its location nor its duration. I tried to contact several of Schechner's actors from that period but only Joan MacIntosh replied, via an email dated 19 May 2019: 'if there were cool down exercises in TPG, I don't remember them'. In other words, if Schechner conducted (or still conducting) any systematic work on the cool-down, there is no record of it.

2. *Actor related exertion*

In this second section of this literature review, I will examine bibliography stretching over three decades in chronological order and provide introductory notes on each decade. Some

literature discusses the actors' exertion from mainly psychological standpoints (Robb, 2017); (Panero, 2019), juxtaposed from practical theatre making ones (Hagen, 1973; 1991); (Marowitz, 1978); (Schechner, 1983; 1985); (Mitchell, 2009); (Unwin, 2004; 2014). This contrast is deliberate, making a clear distinction between trauma that may also affect 'non-arts professionals, such as nurses, therapists and police officers' (Szlawieniec-Haw, 2020, p.3), from concerns common to most healthy performers, such as stage-fright (Giles, 2011) or the challenges pertinent to immediate post-performance exertion (Seton, 2008).

In other words, a distinction is being made between the immediate post-performance stresses facing stage actors, and difficult working conditions or professionalization challenges also encountered by other professionals, such as social workers:

> social workers can become overworked and fatigued personally and professionally. Job stress can include large caseloads, low pay, lack of advancement opportunities, and unclear job roles…emotional stress on the job can include secondary trauma from hearing about a client's loss, abuse, poverty, family violence, medical burdens, neglect, and addiction. Over time, secondary trauma can lead to burnout causing exhaustion, depersonalization, and inefficacy…this fatigue sometimes leads social workers to change professions or to find work that is less emotionally demanding (O'Neill, Slater and Batt, 2019, p.141).

Such research provides a useful reminder that it is not only actors that face uncertain career pathways, 'low pay' or emotional exertion, but that those challenges are not uncommon in other professional environments. For example, police officers experience regular 'stress deriving from organizational mismanagement…experience of traumatic incidents…exposure to operational stressors may result in Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder', which manifests in significant ways: 'intense fear, helplessness or horror, recurrent intrusive and disturbing thoughts and images, persistent avoidance of thoughts and feelings regarding that event and increased arousal' (Brown, Fielding and Grover, 1999, pp.312-3). Professionalization challenges and the pressures for a consistent career are also evident in academia, which

> prides itself for research activity, teaching excellence, knowledge exchanges…overwork is normalised. Scholarly contributions and institutional citizenship are so prized that holidays and sick leave are

> minimised, if not avoided. Therefore, people feel they cannot be honest about their issues or health concerns and keep them secret…Today's society is particularly focused on standards, norms, league tables, achievements and productivity. As a result, ableism is internalised, normalised and ingrained to such an extent that being 'normal or non-disabled' is no longer sufficient. Indeed, transhumanist hyper-normative enhancement is becoming a new normal (Brown and Leigh, 2018, p.986).

Indeed, challenging professionalization and working conditions do not only affect select professions, such as actors, social workers, police officers and academics, instead, recent research suggests a more generalised absence of balance between work and leisure across professions, highlighting the long-term effects of workaholic behaviours 'associated with negative outcomes to the individual, interpersonal relationships, and to organizations' (Meier et al., 2020, p.1). Such research provides much needed perspective, reiterating that some concerns discussed in this group of secondary sources, including substance abuse (Weil, 2004), mental health issues or career progression uncertainty (Hamilton, 1997), may affect people from all walks of life, working within a variety of professional settings, not just actors.

1990s

Prior to the 1990s there is little systematic research conducted in relation to the actors' exertion - with the exception of Kaplan's (1969) and Aaron's (1986) studies of stage-fright, Schechner's (1985) remarks on the neglected status of the cool-down within his seven-part performance sequence, and Wilson's (1985) mention on the performance anxiety of musicians and actors. In contrast, this field is already under development in relation to musicians and in respect to stage-fright (James et al., 1977); (Clark, 1989); (Hamann, 1982); (Neftel et al., 1982). This inconsistency was noted by Dr Brandfonbrener's editorial (1992), encouraging the inclusion of actors within the performing arts medicine umbrella or risk perpetuating 'a major oversight that should be corrected' (1992, p.101).

Subsequent contributions include Geer's (1993) view on the necessity of the cool-down and his doubts on the utility of the 'step-out' developed by Bloch (1993). Konijn's (2000)

contribution on emotion felt by actors on stage is also invaluable, as it challenges actors' assumptions on the direct link between rehearsed emotion and emotion experienced on stage in front of an audience (2000, p.143), instead formulating her theory of task-emotions (2000, p.154). Tust-Gunn's study (1995) highlights positive aspects of actors' work, such as the development of empathy and emotional growth, indicating that acting processes are not inherently detrimental for their well-being. Steptoe et al. (1995) produce the first systematic study of stage-fright particularly for student actors, whilst Burgoyne, Poulin and Rearden (1999) are more in agreement with Geer (1993) than Tust-Gunn (1995) on the effects on acting processes, such as boundary blurring, apparent in some actors. These first beginnings in regards to the actors' psychological stresses represent a variety of concerns, also extensively highlighted by Hamilton (1997).

Brandfonbrener (1992)

By the early 90s, Brandfonbrener (1992) was already considered a pioneer in the study and treatment of the needs of musicians and dancers, as one of the founders of performance arts medicine in the USA (PAMA, 2020). She was acutely aware that actors represented a group of artists that had yet to be considered in the same way as musicians or dancers:

> vocal overuse and abuse, falling scenery, respiratory hazards of special effects, staged scenes of violence that result in unplanned injuries…sleep deprivation; poor dietary habits; excess of caffeine, tobacco, and alcohol; and a higher use of street drugs that I have encountered in either musicians or in dancers (Brandfonbrener, 1992, p.101).

Furthermore, Brandfonbrener (1992) highlighted two other concerns: the actors' financial struggles, with many living a 'hand-to-mouth existence' (1992, p.101), as well as the psychological processes utilised 'to take the personality traits of this character' (1992, p.102).

Geer (1993)

Geer (1993) highlights the need for systematic research on the actors' post-performance phase, following Schechner (1985), whilst personally observing Bloch's (1993) work, concluding that the 'step-out' may be only partially affective, with some actors and on some

occasions (Geer, 1993, p.153). More particularly, Geer (1993) questions whether all actors would quickly return back to a neutral state 'if the performance emotions are particularly strong' (1993, p.155). His contribution remains significant because he elevates the absence of the cool-down to a central pre-occupation, whilst verbalising the necessity for further work in regards to the post-performance phase (Geer, 1993, p.156).

Konijn (1994; 1997; 2000)

Konijn's Dutch first version of the book *Acteurs Spelen Emoties* (1994), which considers whether emotions actors experience on stage are the characters' or their own, became an instant success, prompting a 55 minute documentary on national television (1995) and the sell-out of her book which was re-printed in 1997 as *Acteren en Emoties* (Konijn, 2000, p.14). Translated in English in 2000, the book argues that rehearsal and performance contexts are distinct:

> acting theories do not make a clear distinction between rehearsal and performance. During rehearsal it can be helpful to invoke private emotions in order to become immersed in character emotions…by looking at similarities between him-herself and the character, an actor can gain insight into real life emotions which may help him/her create an inner model of the intendent character emotions. During a performance however, the demands of the actual context – acting in front of an audience – prevent the actor from losing himself in character emotions (Konijn, 2000, pp.162-3).

The distinction between rehearsed emotions and task-emotions performed on stage is often lost in actors, not only because 'for most actors, a real emotion is precious' and 'a souvenir of their validity as artists' (Geer, 1993, p.153), but also because they assume their emotional expression will 'evoke the spectator the same emotional experience'; however these two parameters are 'relatively independent of one another' (Konijn, 2000, p.143). For example, actor Lindsay Crouse points out: 'nobody coaches you on the difference between rehearsing and performing' (Zucker, 2020, p.1), a distinction also confirmed by Bloch in a comment reminiscent of Brecht or Diderot: 'the Alba actor…constantly monitors subjective involvement and adjusts it' (Geer, 1993, p.153). Viewed in this way, emotion generation remains merely one of many parameters that actors are concerned with during performance:

not the primary one (Callery, 2001, pp.148-9); (Noice and Noice, 2002, p.14); (Murphy and Orlick, 2006, p.105); (Hetzler, 2008, p.28). Instead, it is the presence of the audience which distinguishes performances from rehearsals (Aaron, 1986); (Konijn, 2000).

Tust-Gunn (1995)

This unpublished thesis suggests that acting processes and performance should not only be seen in negative light and in this spirit highlights positive attributes actors develop over time, due to their specialist training and practice, including: 'empathy and trust…the use of own memories, emotions…sensitive to and accepting of emotional states…with a tendency of self-exploration' (Robb, 2017, pp.63-4). Tust-Gunn (1995) points out that for many actors the research and actualisation of theatrical roles may be conducive to 'psychological health rather than dysfunction' (1995, p.159), a view also supported by Hagen (1973): 'a correctly functioning actor should, ideally, be the healthiest, least neurotic creature on earth' (1973, p.59). Tust-Gunn (1995) concludes that:

> the primary determinant of whether confronting themselves through their characters resulted in personal growth or distress for actors seemed to be whether or not they were able to understand and synthesize their discoveries…it was disturbing if difficult issues were evoked and the actor had no outlet for understanding them, working them out, or releasing them creatively (1995, pp.150-61).

Tust-Gunn (1995) identifies discussion, awareness and the individuals' ability to synthesize their experiences, as pertinent parameters contributing to either 'personal growth' or 'distress'. This viewpoint suggests that the actors' stresses are relative to their individual response and expectations, echoing Beecher's insight (1946) that response to pain (or any other intense or significant experience) is not only related to the nature of the experience itself, but also on how it is interpreted by the recipient.

Steptoe, Malik & Pay, Pearson, Price, Win (1995)

Although stage-fright has been downplayed as a significant phenomenon by some researchers (Konijn, 2000 p.107), Steptoe et al. (1995) produced a study on stage-fright experienced by student actors, drawing from her previous work on stress and stage-fright experienced by

professional musicians (1983; 1989). More particularly, Steptoe et al. (1995) studied '178 senior full-time drama students at six different colleges' (1995, p.27) discovered that pre-performance strategies, such as deep breathing and attempting to find privacy or revising ones lines, may have little impact on stage-fright, which is 'at least as common amongst student actors as musicians' (1995, p.38).

Hamilton (1997)

Although this study draws heavily from the discipline of ballet, due to the author's extensive training and career, Hamilton (1997) highlights a number of parameters related to forging a professional career that apply to all performing artists. Examples include submitting to the industry's image standards, which may lead to poor nutrition and continuous efforts to maintain low weight (1997, pp.24-6), uncertain career progression (1997, p.52), substance abuse, depression, weight gain (1997, pp.57-8), as well as the necessity to maintain a healthy work-life balance (1997, p.58).

Noice and Noice (1997)

Although theories of cognition on a variety of professional socialisation and expertise, ranging from waiters and field-hockey players, to chess players and computer programmers has been ongoing since the 70s (Noice and Noice, 1997), there are few cognition-related studies on actors and their specific competences, such as, the swift memorisation of large texts or their mental process related to stage business and their embodiment of artistic roles on stage (Noice and Noice, 1997, p.xi). As a result, Noice and Noice (1997) point out the novelty of the field and its numerous potential applications, such as the better understanding of emotion generation and implications for artificial intelligence studies, amongst other examples (1997, p.122).

Burgoyne, Poulin and Rearden (1999)

Burgoyne, Poulin and Rearden (1999) focus their concern on the actors' 'boundary blurring': 'the actor's personal life may take over in performance, leading to the actor's loss of control

onstage [or] the actor's character may take over offstage, with the actor carrying over character personality traits into daily life' (1999, p.163). This work acknowledges Bloch's 'step-out' procedure (1993), corresponds with Geer (1993) that little research has been conducted on the subject and proposes that 'even though the theatre profession has not yet developed boundary-management programs, we think now is the time to bring the subject out of the closet and into the classroom' (1999, p.171).

2000s

The following decade sees an increased volume of research conducted on the nature and intensity of actor related processes. Some, debate the overall importance of emotion generation on stage and its utility for artistic (Murphy and Orlick, 2006); (Noice and Noice, 2002); (Hetzler, 2008) or therapeutic purposes (Scheiffele, 2001); (Baker, 2008). Others dismiss the stereotypical depiction of actors as generally more prone to instability and mental health issues (Cloonan, 2008). Instead, demanding training (Moor, 2013) and the intensity of professional environments (Moore, 2004) are seen as collectively failing to consider the professionalization of actors in a holistic way (Seton, 2009).

Despite the increased input from researchers in regards to the actors' process, only Seton (2008; 2009) consistently mentions the cool-down as a neglected practice for the actor during the post-performance phase. Other research concerns include emotion generation, which is highlighted as only one of the several aspects of the actors' work (Scheiffele, 2001); (Noice and Noice, 2002); (Murphy and Orlick, 2006); (Hetzler, 2008), with the exception of Baker (2008) who elevates emotion to a central pre-occupation.

Scheiffele (2001)

Scheiffele (2001) views altered states of consciousness (ASC) which actors experience, as largely inevitable and potentially beneficial; apparent even when acting approaches, as in Brecht's alienation approach, discourage such manifestations (2001, pp.179-80). Moreover,

she points out that the need to experience ASC is not merely limited to actors or more generally artists, but all humans (2001, p.179), echoing Weil's (2004) assessment on their frequency and manifestation: 'in all places of the earth and in all ages of history' (Weil, 2004, p.14), because it is a biological and not merely a cultural need (2004, p.16). Scheiffele (2001) also indicates that actors are not only required to enter those states, but that regular ASC experiences may be one of the primary reasons for actors to join their profession (Scheiffele, 2001, p.179); (Moore, 2004, p.254). In addition, as ASC 'are associated with both dangers and benefits, theatre practitioners, drama educators, and therapists need to be attentive to the fact that actors might enter an altered state' (Scheiffele, 2001, p.189). Scheiffele's 'dangers and benefits' echoes Szlawieniec-Haw's 'costs and rewards' (2020, pp.4-6), which actors need to be able to acknowledge and manage.

Overall, Scheiffele's (2001) study argues that ASC emerging within acting contexts or drama therapy should be made more widely available (not merely to actors or patients), as alternatives to alcohol and drug induced ASC, in the same way physical exercise 'is now seen as beneficial to most people throughout their lives and not merely a way to train professional athletes' (Scheiffele, 2001, p.190).

Noice and Noice (2002)

Overall, Noice and Noice's (2002) contribution is thematically related to both neuroscience and the work of the actor in training and in practice (Kogan, 2010); (Kemp, 2012); (McConachie, 2015). This study continues the work of identifying the nuts and bolts of the actors' process, deciphering two distinct stages: script analysis and 'active experiencing' in rehearsals and performances (2002, p.7). Their data also indicates that emotion is not considered more important than other areas of performance: 'actors had relatively little concern about emotion as a completely separate entity' (2002, p.14), corresponding with Konijn's (2000) task emotion theory. Although Noice and Noice's (2002) identify emotion,

memory or motor skills as distinct for the purposes of analysis, they acknowledge that actors' cognitive experience of these processes are embodied and simultaneous, rather than mental and sequential; a view that corresponds with that of Murphy and Orlick (2006).

Murphy and Orlick (2006)

In this work, Murphy and Orlick (2006) utilise semi-structured interviews to gain some understanding of the processes actors utilise during rehearsals and performance. They identify seven key mental strategies actors utilise: 'character preparation, focus while performing, pre-performance routines, imagery, confidence, optimal energy level, and performance evaluation' (2006, p.104). This study is particularly useful in the understanding of actor related processes, as it places actors at its centre and allows them to define mental strategies and performing principles utilised, over and above known methodological approaches, such as the Stanislavski System or the Meisner Technique. Murphy and Orlick (2006) utilise those seven groups to organise 45 distinct processes, such as: 'approach it as an organic process; open to exploration; use intuition; relate character to self; fall in love with character; investigate/ask questions; do background research; develop character's history; allow text to inform them about character; focus on listening (receiving message); focus on speaking (delivering message); focus on process in between listening and speaking' (2006, p.105).

What stands out in the presentation of this vocabulary offered by actors is the lack of explicit psychological language or acting methods relating to psychological approaches. This indicates that many actors approach acting in a practical and intuitive way: 'we do not have to get psychoanalytical or delve into Freud, Jung, Reich or Adler to learn to understand ourselves and others and be healthy artists. We have to be truly curious about ourselves and others' (Hagen, 1973, p.29), what Soto-Morettini calls 'a kind of internal psychological guessing and empathy' (2010, p.202).

Importantly for the study of the cool-down, this work highlights the actors' pre-occupation with post-performance reviews: 'constant process of assessment; question performance; deal with critics; define purpose for evaluation' (Murphy and Orlick, 2006, p.105). These mental strategies can be seen to have a two-fold effect on actors: confirming the significance of post-performance self-reviewing for artistic purposes (Luckhurst and Veltman, 2001, p.130, p.152), as well as ensuring the quicker transition from the symbolic world of the stage back to the demands of everyday sociality or the private domain (Wilshire, 1982, pp.xv-xvi); (Hagen, 1973, p.212); (Szlawieniec-Haw, 2020, p.52).

Cloonan (2008)

In her account of counselling and observation of student actors, Cloonan (2008) provides valuable information on the actors' needs and quickly unpicks their stereotypical depiction as neurotic, immature and children-like, the 'wantonly impractical…lost in dreamy imaginings' artists (2008, pp.2-3), despite the predominance of such stereotypes: 'there are many reasons why the life of a successful player appears so satisfactory to the adolescent, and to a certain type of unreconciled individual' (Lane, 1960, p.32). The existence of such stereotypes is also noted by Wilson (1985, p.133), Hamilton (1997, pp.viii-ix) and more recently by Szlawieniec-Haw (2020, p.15).

Instead, Cloonan (2008) suggests that it is the nature of training environments and industry conditions that shape insecurity upon student actors, which to the untrained eye manifests in self-centric 'demanding, egotistical and over-demonstrative behaviour', but ultimately no more pronounced than that of other people (2008, p.3). More particularly, Cloonan (2008) indicates that the constant scrutiny encountered at training environments (2008, p.3) and the clear lack of career progression – as 80% of graduate actors are unemployed 4 years after graduation – are the main triggers in the need for counselling (2008, p.7).

Baker (2008)

Baker (2008) provides a comprehensive study of the history and status of Bloch's Alba Emoting, both as a stand-alone technique, as well as in conjunction with Stanislavski's system (2008, p.79), Rasaboxes (2008, p.95) amongst other acting methods (2008, pp.79-106). Also, the utility and versatility of Alba Emoting (Bloch, 1993) for actors is acknowledged, placing emotion at the centre of her study and echoing Geer's (1993) call for a post-performance process, whilst indicating Bloch's 'step-out' procedure as appropriate (2008, p.26). Baker (2008) concludes that Alba Emoting can be seen as therapeutic and should be utilised by anyone, not only actors (2008, p.116).

Hetzler (2008)

Hetzler (2008) examines an assumption commonly examined, that emotion is a primary pre-occupation amongst actors and controlling its manifestation and intensity should be seen as central in training and performance. However, interviews suggest that actors

> reject many of the presumptions that acting theorists and other researchers put forth. The task for the actor is not to reproduce an emotion in a scene; rather, it entails performing multiple tasks within the scope of performing. The actor must be engaged in the scene, reacting to the circumstances while still staying in his/her light and holding for laughs. This speaks directly to the idea that actors have multiple levels of consciousness and that the reproduction of emotion is not the most significant aspect of performance for the character actor (Hetzler, 2008, p.28).

In this way, Hetzler's (2008) work is similar to that of Konijn (2000), Noice and Noice (2002) and Murphy and Orlick (2006), in viewing the work of actors as multifaceted, interactive and outward looking – the opposite of introspective and psychological (Callery, 2001, pp.148-9). This perspective highlights the multi-faceted nature of acting processes and performance for actors, which should neither be seen as the replication or manipulation of emotion for artistic purposes, nor considered drama therapy.

Seton (2008; 2009)

Following Schechner (1985) and Geer (1993), Seton (2009) reiterates the necessity for actors to adopt holistic approaches in regards to the preparation and overall health and in his report

argues that this requires the support of training environments and other sectors of the entertainments industry (2009, pp.62-3). Amongst other issues raised are body image, substance abuse, the absence of the cool-down, and the conflicting role of educational and wider industry values in changing the prevailing culture, which he notes as 'slow yet emerging' (2009, p.62). Moreover, Seton (2008) reiterates the necessity for processes 'providing support for actors, in the cool-down and aftermath' (2008, p.4), and 'to warmup and cool-down as part of management occupational health and safety accountability' (2009, p.37). Seton's (2008; 2009) consistent contribution on the post-performance cool-down and later collaborations with other researchers on the holistic consideration of the actors' training and professionalization (Prior et al., 2015); (Prior, Maxwell, Szabó and Seton, 2015); (Maxwell, Seton and Szabó, 2015); (Seton, Maxwell and Szabó, 2019), make him an authoritative figure in this area of research.

Research in the last decade

The volume of literature engaging with the multitude and multifaceted stresses actors experience has increased during the past 10 years, including a growing interest in the post-performance cool-down (Prior et al., 2015); (Maxwell, Seton and Szabó, 2015); (Wigmore, 2018); (Seton, Maxwell and Szabó, 2019). However, the majority of interest is noted in psychological studies focusing on emotional exertion (Robb, 2017); (Panero, 2019), trauma (Thomson and Jaque, 2012); (Jones, 2014); therapy (Arias, 2019), and the emotional vulnerability of actors whilst training (Prior, 2012); (Sacay-Bagwell, 2013); (Taylor, 2016). Other studies include stage-fright (Giles, 2011), Bloch's 'step-out' procedure Kalawski (2011) and the overall training and working conditions of actors (Entertainment Assist, 2016); (Thomson and Jaque, 2017). Finally, Szlawieniec-Haw's (2020) contribution is a pragmatic offering from a theatre maker's perspective, recognising both costs and rewards experienced, avoiding emphasis on pathology:

> the continued declarations about actors' mental health based on their experiences with representing *dolesse* are highly problematic. Not only are

> there people who are pathologizing the idea of actors encountering costs relating to their work, but there are also scholars who have framed the costs themselves through the medical model…inherent in this model is the notion that health and wellness is the purview of professionals…within this system individuals are indoctrinated into believing that it is their duty to strive for optimal health - and that not achieving it is a form of failure. What constitutes optimal health though, is defined and enforced by medical and societal institutions. Individuals are not given the opportunity to engage in a dialogue about their functionality with the medical industry, working to build personalised understandings of health. Instead, definitions of health and the labels of unhealthy or traumatised are made with little or no input from the individuals on the patient side of medical power dynamics (Szlawieciec-Haw, 2020, p.67).

In this excerpt, Szlawieniec-Haw (2020) argues that it is more helpful to treat acting as a highly demanding profession, rather than a problem that requires clinical solutions. Similarly, in an interview dated 19 January 2021 Morris argued in favour of distinguishing pathology from costs related to the artistic nature of performing:

> I don't know whether the answer is to pathologize. You know, this thing about wellness, how the students tend to take it up, and this is only anecdotal, they say they have psychological and emotional problems. Then wellness is about some kind of therapy. But what [question] I think is helpful: what is the creative aspect, which is different to the everyday space? (Morris, zoom interview).

These insights provide a particular perspective on the different nature of artistic and everyday interaction, and the requirement to distinguish between artistic and social processes, as well as the cool-down from therapy. Consequently, actors require to be treated as highly trained professionals and as adults, with the agency to self-define their artistic narrative and own their process. Also, Szlawieniec-Haw (2020) makes the point of 'power dynamics' explicit in this conversation of pathologizing actors, which echoes Bell's (1997) perception of health and illness more generally, providing no easy answers: 'health and illness are understood as symptoms of a broadly conceived realm of order or disorder that draws no hard-and-fast boundaries between the individual and the community, the mind and the body, or the material and the spiritual' (1997, p.116).

Using Bell's (1997) insight, it becomes clearer that in the attempt to categorise, as well as control concepts of health and illness, we may be removing agency from actors rather than empowering them to make their own informed decisions. Instead, by using the latest information and best available training, including the practice of the cool-down (my view), actors should be expected to systematically engage with their post-performance needs, own their balance sheet between costs and rewards, and learn to seek external medical help when necessary (Szlawieniec-Haw, 2020, p.138).

Kalawski (2011)

The study considers the utility of Bloch's Alba Emoting 'step-out' (Bloch, 1993) towards the regulation of emotions (2011, p.10), through the control of breathing and heart rate, examining its applications with actors and non-actors alike. Pertinent to the study of the cool-down, Kalawski (2011) reiterates the utility of the 'step-out' procedure in the generating of awareness: 'the objective of the ''step-out'' technique…is to achieve a relaxed yet alert state…the person is standing up and with his or her eyes open. The goal is to be aware of one's environment, as opposed to looking inward' (2011, p.183). In other words, the 'step-out' promotes 'emotional regulation' by the control and management of 'respiratory-postural-facial patterns', whilst Kalawski also makes a crucial distinction between health-promoting 'emotion regulation' and 'repression or inhibition', which could lead to health problems (2011, p.184).

Giles (2011)

Giles's (2011) study focuses on stage-fright experienced by performers, however only 15% of her participants were actors, with the majority of the performers being musicians (58%) and 9% dancers and singers (Giles, 2011, p.3), concluding that 'most performers…experience only low to moderate manifestations of stage-fright which are very common for any kind of public presentation' (2011, p.8). Although 'a certain degree of stage-fright is indispensable for a high-quality and engaging performance' (2011, p.8), when stage-fright becomes severe

actors should be referred to a 'specialist psychotherapist' (2011, p.12). Although Giles (2011) suggests that adequate sleep, the partaking in enjoyable hobbies and an active social life with friends and family may help performers manage stage-fright (2011, p.12), these strategies can do little to help those that may need professional help outside artistic settings.

Thomson and Jaque (2012)

This study examines whether the actor's training and engagement in acting processes makes them more resilient when faced with personal mourning or trauma. Thomson and Jaque (2012) conclude that actors display 'greater vulnerability for psychological distress' compared to a control group (2012, p.367). In other words, enhanced emotional self-awareness, specialised training and the existence of artistic 'structural support' developing actors into 'privileged emotion managers' (Orzechowicz, 2008), does not ensure resilience in cases of loss or trauma experienced in real life situations. This corresponds with Goffman's (1959) assessment that 'unlike ordinary life, nothing real or actual can happen to the performed characters' (1959, p.246), confirming the distinction between on the one hand artistic/symbolic performance, and on the other social performance or private experience. Thomson and Jaque's (2012) conclusion, confirms a 'body of research that suggests that there is a psychological cost for participants engaged in the creative arts', but at the same time 'as audiences, we benefit that these actors are willing to endure a career of instability to provide a wealth of enjoyment and cultural enrichment for us' (2012, p.367). If indeed such costs are to a degree inevitable in this career, so should be the systematic consideration and management of these costs (Seton, 2008; 2009), inclusive of the cool-down for actors following a theatre performance (Panoutsos, 2017).

Prior (2012)

Although there is no mention of the cool-down following performances, Prior (2012) provides a comprehensive study on actor training, including the discourse on whether one can teach/learn acting, the utility and variety of acting approaches (2012, pp.17-30) and the

background and training of actor-trainers (2012, p.97). Prior (2012) also discusses the realities and challenges of the working conditions that await actors following graduation (2012, p.69) and the differences between university and conservatoire actor-training environments (2012, p.141). This last point echoes Seton (2009), in regards to the 'ongoing tension as to the context in which the best training might take place – is it through the conservatoire or through the university' (2009, p.21). This study provides a valuable snapshot in regards to the culture and practices of contemporary training environments, especially when considering the potential incorporation of systematic cool-down protocols, side-by-side other methods taught.

Sacay-Bagwell (2013)

Sacay-Begwell (2013) an actor-trainer and academic, highlights the absence of processes to deal with 'emotional hangover', in the tradition of Schechner (1985), Geer (1993), Seton (2008; 2009) and Kurtz (2011). The examples noted however, are related to 'emotional hangover' following the end of the performance run, not following each and every performance: 'I fell into a bit of a depression when it [the performance] ended' (2013, p.22); 'a troubling experience she had after a production of the play *Proof*…once the show closed'; and 'another respondent…experienced emotional hangover after working on a production' (2013, p.23). In addition, from the several post-rehearsal/post-performance approaches available, she finds the 'step-out' most useful and practical, quoting several actors known to have benefited from its systematic utilisation (2013, pp.29-30). Also, Sacay-Begwell (2013) is a teacher of Alba Emoting, certified at the CL2 level (2013, p.31).

Mitchell (2014)

Mitchell (2014) sheds light on the impact of the actor's aesthetic labour and body image (2014, p.71) and particularly the unstated norms, which exist within the entertainment industry, echoing Seton's (2009, p.61) discourse on body image requiring awareness within both training and professional environments, also reiterated elsewhere (Entertainment Assist,

2016, p.52); (Thomson and Jaque, 2017, p.299). However, actors are not the only performers that have to adhere to industry stereotypes in relation to body image; ballet dancers encounter such obstacles much more systematically and earlier than most actors (Hamilton, 1997, pp.24-6). For example, the 'comparing [of] dancers to non-dancers reveals a higher prevalence of disordered eating, as well as actual eating disorder diagnoses' (Thomson and Jaque, 2017, p.297), as ballet dancers encounter body image and aesthetic labour concerns from early childhood (Entertainment Assist, 2016, p.16).

Jones (2014)

Jones presents two methods utilised at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, the Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing (EMDR) 'the preferred treatment for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder' (2014, p.7) and the Nadine George Technique (NGT) warm-up, 'using this as integral to their warm-up prior to live performance, the actor is able to "map" the performance space and appropriately match their vocal energy to it' (2014 p.10). In other words, the EMDR is a process specifically designed to identify and manage Post-Traumatic-Stress-Disorder and the NGT is meant to be utilised within pre-performance contexts as a warm-up. As a result, it is unclear to what extent these processes could be utilised following post-performance contexts. This is because the EMDR is a method aimed at identifying trauma in student actors, requires a non-performance setting with a psychologist present to conduct the sessions, during which the relationship between the EMDR and the NGT is explored (2014, pp.11-2). However, Cloonan (2008), Giles (2011) and Szlawieniec-Haw (2020) argue that trauma, as well as the treatment of physical and mental health issues should be seen as distinct considerations from theatre making processes. Similarly, drama therapy's objectives and theatre making are also distinct; the first ones being therapeutic: 'psychodrama is an experiential psychotherapy in which guided role-play is used to gain insights and work on personal and interpersonal problems and possible solutions' (Orkibi and Feniger-Schaal, 2019), whilst the latter ones artistic in nature.

Notwithstanding the distinction between art and therapy, although the NGT can be seen as a beneficial vocal warm-up process during the pre-performance phase (Jones, 2014, pp.8-9), it may not be considered within post-performance contexts because the needs are not the same. For example, during their warm-up, actors are required to manage their 'heart rate average of 144 bpm' reflecting 'pre-preparatory arousal' (Hague and Sandage, 2016, p.127), go 'over lines in the play' (Steptoe et al., 1995, p.34), conduct 'deep breath/relaxation exercises…meditating' (1995, p.34) and 'trying to be alone' (1995, p.34) amongst other common preparations. In contrast, following a theatre performance and the subsequent exertion (and relief) that follows, actors are required to acknowledge and manage their hormonal activation, control their breath, meet their visceral drives, decrease the elevated heart rate and consider their gradual re-integration required to meet the demands of immediate socialisation and networking opportunities (Seton, Maxwell and Szabó, 2019). This set of needs is different in nature from the ones actors face during the warm-up phase.

Prior, Maxwell, Szabó and Seton (2015)

This study proposes the need for a more holistic consideration of the student actors' needs, in the tradition of Brandfonbrener (1992), in light of the actors' 'occupational vulnerabilities and risks associated with their work as professionals' (Prior et al., 2015, p.59). This comprehensive study focuses on training environments and the young actor 'how are young actors trained to deal with moving in and out of potentially distressing "worlds"?' (2015, p.62), the realities of their subsequent professionalization and 'workplace behaviour' (2015, p.62), and the lack of cool-down processes from training environments, where 'there is little if any training offered to help students cool down' (2015, p.68). Finally, Prior et al. (2015) conclude that these gaps in training indicate the need for a 'more comprehensive and deeper awareness of…physical, vocal and psychological hazards and the demands of industry, including financial, political and relational challenges' (2015, p.69). These multifaceted

concerns are in correspondence with those reflected in similarly comprehensive studies, such as Entertainment Assist (2016) and Thomson and Jaque (2017).

Maxwell, Seton and Szabó (2015)

This study also follows Brandfonbrener (1992) and Geer (1993) in considering a more holistic appreciation of the actors' post-performance needs and notes how the majority of actors adhere to a warm-up (2015, p.92), but in the absence of a cool-down actors display a 'reliance on alcohol as a means with which to both "cool down" after performance…much of the drinking is associated with forms of sociality linked to working in this field' (2015, p.110). Consequently, Maxwell, Seton and Szabó (2015) argue in favour of 'an industry-wide obligation to provide actors with structured opportunities to cool-down and debrief after performance' (2015, p.110). This study is most important because of its explicit argument in favour of established cool-down processes, as well as the direct link between post-performance socialisation, alcohol consumption and the actors' exertion.

Entertainment Assist (2016)

Although this report examines the field of all performing artists working within the Australian entertainment industry, its findings provide a valuable snapshot of the multifaceted challenges facing actors everywhere, such as: 'insufficient regular employment due to a lack of diversity in skills…a lack of career mobility…irregular working hours…high rates of injury…low financial rewards' (2016, p.13). One significant conclusion is that performers are 'being diagnosed with mental health conditions, but the rates of diagnosis are in line with population figures' (2016, p.168), confirming the absence of a direct link between acting related exertion and mental health. Other findings include that amongst performing artists (all categories), alcohol use is twice that of the general population (2016, p.173), suicidal tendencies six times higher (2016, p.173) and drug use much higher than the general population (2016, p.168). Despite the lack of acknowledgement of the post-performance phase or the cool-down, this study is particularly useful in providing a detailed account of the

actors' professionalization through social and psychological standpoints, whilst highlighting a variety of parameters pertinent to their general health, the role of family and friends, sleep disturbance and the role of the performers' belief or 'passion' in their work to overcome the multi-faceted challenges they encounter (2016, p.171).

Taylor (2016)

Taylor's (2016) thesis, much like Prior's (2012) comprehensive study engages with the training of actors, and the role of emotion, the policies of acting environments, the acting teachers and their ability to provide practices within a safe environment for student actors. Although her focus is pedagogical, she acknowledges professional contexts and the absence of the cool-down from both training and professional settings (2016, pp.51-6), as well as the pertinent discourse on this absence beginning with Schechner (1985) and continued with Geer, (1993), Burgoyne, Poulin and Rearden, (1999) and Seton (2008; 2009). Taylor (2016) also makes reference to a report (Maxwell, Seton and Szabó, 2015) linking the absence of post-performance cool-down processes with drinking at the bar following theatre performances, as the default position within the acting community (2016, p.199).

Moreover, as a trained drama therapist, Taylor (2016) makes specific reference to a drama therapy technique called 'closure', where a ritual is performed or a debriefing takes place, a process akin to a cool-down; however, in practice 'closure' almost never takes place during training and in class environments 'due to lack of time' (2016, p.192). This admission corresponds with Schechner's observation that 'after performing, performers are eager to meet friends—there is always a rush to get out of the theatre. People want to close up shop' (Mandell, 2017, p.42). Importantly, Taylor (2016) points out that despite the occasional accounts of boundary blurring, acting is not an inherently dangerous profession in regards to mental health 'if the person [is] psychologically "solid" and [has] a clear understanding of what "acting" is' (2016, pp.194-5).

Robb (2017)

Robb's (2017) thesis of the actors' personal well-being (PWB) is approached through her extensive training as a theatre maker, as well as a psychologist (2017, pp.16-7). This combination is utilised in identifying a number of issues that student and professional actors face, including the lack of cool-down processes to meet the their post-performance exertion (2017, p.63), as well as their inability to fully verbalise those needs (2017, p.117). Although she concludes that the actors' stresses are considerable (2017, p.152) and further research is required to rectify this gap in literature (2017, p.181), Robb (2017) also makes reference to a variety of other issues pertinent to the actors' working conditions and socialisation. These include, their social position at the fringes of society (2017, p.139), the transient nature of professional relationships (2017, p.140), their lack of power within the entertainment industry (2017, pp.137-8), and alcohol use as a widely established method to unwind from a variety of stresses (2017, p.138).

Thomson and Jaque (2017)

This is a very comprehensive study - and similar in breadth to the Australian report on performance artists from Entertainment Assist (2016) - which covers every aspect of the creative process of all performing artists, including psychological viewpoints, as well as the health risks associated with their lifestyle and process, including burn-out (Thomson and Jaque, 2017, p.364). Although there is no particular reference to post-performance cool-down processes, this study makes a valuable companion to all researchers exploring the stresses performers experience in training and later as professionals, what Thomson and Jaque call 'protean careers' (2017, p.325), which represent an 'extreme form of portfolio careers…a typical career for most of today's performing artists' (2017, pp.316-7).

Wigmore (2018)

Wigmore's (2018) master's dissertation investigates the relation of trauma and acting processes, the latter providing 'a therapeutic outlet' for some actors, whilst for others the

'power to cause psychological damage' (2018, p.2). Wigmore follows Schechner (1985); Geer (1993); Bloch (1993); Tust-Gunn (1995); Burgoyne, Poulin and Rearden (1999); Kurtz, (2011); Seton (2008; 2009); Maxwell, Seton and Szabó, (2015) in acknowledging the necessity for more studies in relation to 'boundary blurring and boundary maintenance between the actors' own identity and a character' (2018, p.42). Wigmore (2018) also suggests that acting environments, directors and industry working practices need to be reviewed (2018, p.43) and reiterates the need for cool-down processes for actors (2018, p.35).

Arias (2019)

Arias's (2019) literature review is conducted from the perspective of drama therapy and how its processes could be beneficial for actors, in managing boundary blurring and mental health (2019, p.2). Arias (2019) points out that due to the limited literature on the application of drama therapy on actors (2019, p.16), the utility of these processes remains unclear during post-performance settings (2019, p.15). Moreover, Arias (2019) makes reference to the 'de-role' (2019, p.23), rather than the immediate post-performance cool-down. As indicated elsewhere in this thesis, the de-role should refer to a longer process that takes place at the end of the performance run (Szlawieniec-Haw, 2020, p.56) when the role's text, songs, dance routines, fight scenes, embodied speech patterns and behaviours will no longer be employed by the actor due to the end of the performance run. This phase corresponds with Schechner's (1985), and Seton's (2008) 'aftermath', which may last between 'three weeks to a month' (Mandell, 2017, p.38). In contrast, the cool-down should refer to the daily and immediate post-performance phase, within the first hour or so, when actors remain under the influence of emotions, visceral drives (Loewenstein, 1996); (De Ridder, et al., 2014) and the adrenaline rush (Hormone Health Network, 2018).

For example, Burgoyne, Poulin and Rearden (1999) present the case of Tom, an actor who whilst performing was also rehearsing, in other words, engaged in two different theatre

projects at the same time – a common professional occurrence (1999, p.164), also noted by Nakamura (1990, p.88). This actor would not be able to use a daily de-role, as both roles (one performed in front of live audiences and the other under development/rehearsed) would require remaining readily available within the actor, for the duration of the performance run and rehearsals respectively. However, in this case, the actor could utilise systematic cool-down processes, to better negotiate the daily immediate post-rehearsal and post-performance transitions required, whilst keeping both roles alive within him to accommodate the demands of performances and rehearsals.

Panero (2019)

Panero's (2019) article examines to what degree 'boundary blurring, dissociation, and flow' maybe detrimental in actors (2019, p.428). For example, Panero (2019) discusses how identification acting techniques, such as Method acting may contribute to instances of dissociation and boundary blurring (2019, p. 436), as well as the actors' state of 'being in the moment' indicates they are experiencing flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). Panero's (2019) literature review provides useful psychological perspectives on actor related processes, whilst on the question of whether acting can cause 'boundary blurring' or dissociation in actors, there is not enough evidence either way: 'inconsistent results regarding the possible components (i.e. trauma, absorption, fantasy, and flow) of dissociation in actors' (2019, p.238). It is also important to reiterate that there are numerous actors that do not primarily associate their acting approach with identification processes (Bates, 1986); (Konijn, 2000); (Luckhurst and Veltman, 2001); (Callery, 2001); (Zucker, 2002); (Hetzler, 2008).

Seton, Maxwell and Szabó (2019)

This study provides valuable perspectives on the actors' working challenges, including the competitive nature of the acting profession, the actors' reluctance to seek help when necessary, the explicit link between drinking and networking (2019, p.128) and the absence of the cool-down (2019, p.136). Furthermore, special attention is paid to the 'asymmetry'

between elaborate warm-up processes and the absence of the cool-down during the post-performance phase, which is alcohol fuelled; this 'comes at a significant cost to actors' overall wellbeing' and fails to mark the transitions actors require (2019, p.140). This study is very useful for researchers seeking to develop their argument in favour of holistic actor related processes in general, whilst finding enough evidence regarding the potential of the post-performance cool-down practice in particular.

Szlawieniec-Haw (2020)

Szlawieniec-Haw (2020), a working actor, a screenwriter, as well as an academic, offers a pragmatic view of the actor's process, focusing on the costs experienced when regularly representing and embodying 'human suffering, distress and violence' (2020, p.1), coining the term *dolesse*: 'derived from the Latin for pain, suffering, sorrow and grief (*dolor*) and essence (*esse*)' (2020, p.5), acknowledging the emotional connection actors are required to make and how emotions linger on in the short and long-term (2020, pp.45-58). This distinction between short-term and long-term exertion is also combined with the highlighting of interpersonal emotional lingerings between actors, not just between self and role (Szlawieniec-Haw, 2020, pp.48-9), affecting not only the immediate post-performance emotional and physical states, but also altering - to a degree and for a limited amount of time - interpersonal relationships between actors (2020, pp.51-3).

Szlawieniec-Haw's (2020) most important contribution however, is her distancing from the school of thought that indicates actors as in need of saving from their acting processes or the performance industry, and that there must be someone or something specific to blame for the actors' multiple professional and artistic challenges (2020, p.5). Instead, she adopts the pragmatic view of an acting profession encompassing both costs as well as rewards, whilst actors require having the training and agency to self-define, manage and verbalise their needs, not in terms of healing but process (Szlawieniec-Haw, 2020, p.122).

In the next section, I will consider the third and final group of secondary sources examined in this literature review. This group is comprised of the work of actors, trainers, directors and other theatre makers, reflecting the discourses that have been on-going on every part of the actors process, with the exception of the cool-down, which remains largely neglected in theory, training and professional practice.

3. *Cool-down: the theatre makers' neglected practice*

Training

The majority of actors engage in training processes, despite how non-linear most actors' careers actually are: training does not guarantee employment, only the acquirement of skills (Mast, 1986, pp.133-4). There are several examples of successful actors that have not completed any formal training, as well as those that have, but gradually developed their own way of working (Luckhurst and Veltman, 2001). Either way, few practitioners take the time to record their insights (Hagen, 1973, pp.5-7), as in Stanford Meisner's *On Acting* (Meisner and Longwell, 1987), Matazo Nakamura's *Kabuki, Backstage, Onstage: An Actor's Life* (1990), Uta Hagen's *A Challenge for the Actor* (1991), Yoshi Oida's *An Actor Adrift* (1992), as well as the latest English translation of Stanislavski's System in one volume, *An Actor's Work* (2008).

In terms of the continuous loop between theory and practice, such literature is valuable, because of the authors' systematic engagement with the practical aspects of performance, as well as the training of actors, as directors or acting coaches. For example, Oida (1992), in addition to his recurring collaborations with Peter Brook as an actor, formed his own theatre group, organised and led workshops, as well as directed several theatrical productions (1992, pp.202-12). Similarly, Stanislavski through the Moscow Art Theatre gradually developed his

comprehensive actor-training system, a result of his engagement with performances as an actor, director and teacher (Carnicke, 2009, pp.1-2). Likewise, despite Meisner's (1987) early successes as an actor in the theatre and in film, he wrote: 'the only time I am free and enjoying myself is when I am teaching' (1987, p.11). In addition to Meisner's teaching for several decades at the Neighbourhood Playhouse, he also developed his own acting method, the Meisner Technique (Meisner and Longwell, 1987); (Moseley, 2012).

Other actors yet, reflect their overall experience within the profession in interviews and books that are more narrative-based than methodological, such as: Clive Swift's *The Job of Acting* (1976); Peter Barkworth's *About Acting* (1980), Leo MacKern's *Just Resting* (1983), Carole Zucker's *Conversation with Actors* (2002). It is important to point out that in both types of literature generated by actors there is no mention or acknowledgment of the cool-down following a theatre performance.

Training at grassroots level

Although in the Euro-American tradition, systematic actor training does not begin until adulthood (Growtoski, 1968, p.50), the absence of the cool-down originates at the grassroots level, such as primary and secondary theatre education. For example, in Brian Woodlands's *The Teaching of Drama in the Primary School* (1993) the warm-up is considered (1993, p.44); the cool-down is not. Similarly, *Drama 9-1*, from Coordination Group Publication books (CGP, 2018), widely used in secondary schools to study GCSE drama, includes sections on fundamental theatre related theory, such as dramatic structure and style, whilst other sections cover vocal and physical skills required by actors, as well as the understanding of the processes of devising and rehearsing; no sections indicate the importance of the warm-up or the cool-down (Drama 9-1, CGP, 2018). Along the same lines, A-Level drama curriculum primarily focuses on the reviewing of performances and the theoretical analysis of dramatic structure. Despite the requirement for A-Level students to devise and rehearse

theatre pieces, there is no mention of the importance of warm-up and cool-down processes (Edexcel A Level Drama, 2016). In an interview on 1 May 2019, theatre director and primary school drama teacher Dominic Hedges confirmed that:

> when it comes to analysing text, there is no difference between how they analyse a play and how they analyse a novel…and when it comes to the practical side of GSCE Drama, I don't remember anything about warm-up or cool-down. [In my theatre training] warm-up was a completely unknown practice until I reached university and warm-up was not completely separated from PE – a physical warm-up… and I went to a school with good A-Level staff…there was never any warming-up unless the teacher would come to the warm-up and we would use his warm-up techniques. Otherwise we would do no warm-up and certainly no cool-down. You would just tumble out, out of the stage and into the bar (Hedges, interview).

What Hedges describes here, is the lack of awareness and training for the cool-down in both GCSE and A-Level theory and practice. Consequently, theatre practitioners' only post-performance process is to 'tumble out of the stage and into the bar'. In other words, although GCSE and A-Level theoretical approaches seem comprehensive in other areas, they neither consider the actors' post-performance needs, nor highlight the value of ordered transitions during this phase. Moreover, Hedges adds that when the warm-up is considered, it is linked to merely physical needs. To counter such established practices when teaching primary school students, Hedges described his attempts at introducing a warm-up in his pre-performance routine: 'it is something we do from Year 3…they have a moment to focus, to spend on themselves and on their own character, they understand their own run-up to whatever piece they're doing…we take 10 minutes, which is a large chunk of time for them to come out of school work and focus on themselves' (Hedges, interview). Hedge's holistic approach to preparation represents an exception to primary school pre-performance routines, but the post-performance phase remains out of his control:

> it was wonderful when we did this show at the theatre because we worked so hard for this, for those young people it mattered, that they did some extremely good performances and we never even got to say goodbye to them because the theatre wanted us to leave the space as soon as possible and the parents wanted to take their kids to other things. Especially with Y6s, I remember Anastasia, she did a remarkable piece of work, and we never got to say 'well done' to her, because she was out the door. So, yeah there is no protected time [following a theatre performance], especially

> when you work in the theatres and you work in other peoples' buildings, there seems to be no protected time (Hedges, interview).

Hedges talks about 'moving on to other things', 'protected time' and 'other peoples' buildings', raising two separate concerns. First, parents are unaware of what their children's post-performance needs may be and as a result initialise or encourage a quick transition, leaving the theatre space as quickly as possible. Here Hedges uses the term 'protected time' to describe that the children's post-performance exertion needs to be considered during their transition from the stage to everyday sociality and whatever-comes-next in every child's busy schedule. Second, theatre spaces operate under strict timeframes, although it is unclear whether those pressures emanate from financial limitations, scheduling constraints or cultural norms. Secondary sources and Hedges's account suggest that the imbalance between the warm-up and cool-down begins at primary and secondary schools, that is, from the grassroots level.

Training at drama schools

In contrast to the GCSE and A-Level exam-centred approaches to theatre, professional acting training is more practical, specialised and holistic. For example, as a student at L.A.M.D.A., amongst a rich curriculum including systematic voice and movement training, I was also introduced to Yoga and Alexander Technique classes, standard in most drama schools and academies during the early 1990s; however, those were never linked with post-performance exertion. In other words, although training environments encourage the learning and use of holistic approaches, such as the warm-up, they fail to view their transferable nature, for example, within post-performance contexts:

> actor training institutions need to fully recognise the importance of cool downs and designate a compulsory few minutes at the end of each performance to assist in the release of physical and emotional tensions associated with the performances. If this practice is established at drama schools, it is likely that graduates will take the practice into employment environments, eventually formalising this ritual as best practice in the general acting profession (Taylor, 2016, p.199).

Taylor's suggestion to 'designate a compulsory few minutes at the end of each performance' is rarely verbalised with such intentionality and with an equally clear objective: 'that graduates take this practice into employment'. The absence of cool-down training remains significant, because of the important role training environments play in the establishment of practices, confirmed by the plethora of training approaches available, including Jerzy Grotowski's *Towards a Poor Theatre* (1968) for a physical way into *via negativa*; Clive Barker's *Theatre Games* (1977) to encourage playful approaches to improvisation; John Barton's *RSC in Playing Shakespeare* (1984) navigating blank verse; Cicely Berry's *The Actor and His Text* (1987) a manual for the cultivation of the voice and the handling of different types of text; Stephen Wangh's *An Acrobat at Heart* (2000) for a physical approach to training inspired by Grotowski; Kelly Mcevenue's *The Alexander Technique for Actors* (2001) to manage tension reflected in breathing and posture; Declan Donnellan's method influenced by Freud and Stanislavski in *The Actor and the Target* (2002); Nick Moseley's *Meisner in Practice* (2012) to cultivate spontaneity in real time between actors; Michael Lugering's embodied cognition ideas in *The Expressive Actor: Integrated Voice, Movement and Acting Training* (2012); Brecht's notes on *Verfremdung* (Unwin, 2014, p.48); Dick McCaw's overview and distinct nature of *Training the Actor's Body: A Guide* (2018), to name but a few examples of Euro-American training methods and discourses reflected in literature.

Moreover, the importance of the training phase is not only suggested by the multitude of theoretical standpoints in regards to training, but also in the quality and intensity of the discourse. Examples include Alfreds (2007), pointing out that in comparison with other performance artists, actors train the least and should do more to make training a life-long learning process, becoming fully conversant in all the different methods and practices: similarly to dancers (2007, p.30). Likewise, Schechner (1985) observes how actors like to

speak in favour of 'lifelong learning'; in practice this is merely 'lip service' and most actors are just happy to having 'completed' the training in order to get on with acting professionally (1985, p.20).

Grotowski (1968) provides a different kind of criticism on actor-training in the West: that it starts too late compared to Eastern tradition performance training methods, which require actors to begin at a very young age (Grotowski, 1968, p.50). On this, Schechner (2002) argues that such early stage training would only make sense in the acquirement of codified acting skills, where the actor is mastering 'a system separate from ordinary behaviour', and goes on to explain that in the Euro-American tradition 'one can begin to learn realistic or Brechtian acting relatively late in life because people have "practiced" daily behaviour all their lives' (2002, p.158). McCaw (2009) also challenges Grotowski's (1968) notion that adult training starts too late: 'recent research indicates that the brain retains its plasticity well into maturity and thus is capable of a constant state of transformation' (2009, p.61). Notwithstanding this dynamic model of learning proposed by McCaw (2009), Prior (2012) echoes Knowles (1975) when he distinguishes teaching children from teaching adults, by using the Greek term 'andragogy' (ανδραγωγία) in reference to the learning processes particular to adults, rather than pedagogy (παιδαγωγία), which refers to the learning processes particular to children:

> pedagogy can be defined as the art and science of teaching children, with the emphasis being placed upon the teacher to decide content and structured and finally test the learning…actor training is not about dependency upon the teacher but rather about autodidacticism – particularly important for the actor constantly facing such an array of new challenges rarely seen in other professions (Prior, 2012, p.210).

This wide spectrum of viewpoints related to the actors' education indicate that they are exposed to a variety of training approaches and specific methods; excluding of the cool-down, which is not systematically considered within post-performance contexts, preventing a similar flourish of cool-down discourse and practice.

Workshops

Workshops often represent a bridge between training and rehearsal, which may or may not lead to public performances, and are sometimes used as an explorative or devising tool in a project that may not include a 'pre-existent script' as a point of origin (Schechner, 1985, p.20). These are often run by professional trainers (Wangh, 2000) or veteran actors specialising in a particular area of performance, such as improvisation, theatre games, clown technique or Feldenkrais (Barker, 1977). Commonly, workshops provide the opportunity to introduce new ways of working: 'of using the body, accepted texts, accepted feelings' (Schechner, 1985, p.99). However, for McCaw (2009) 'training isn't about the accumulation of new skills but is often a process of questioning skills already acquired, which in turn describes the dynamic and *raison d'être* of continuing training' (2009, p.60), including the utility of workshops. Other times they are run by directors, to assist in the development of a new play or as an extended rehearsal tool linked to the overall concept and realisation of the performance (Swain, 2011, pp.124-5).

Para-theatrical workshop application

Workshops are also used as a bridge to new experiences that may or may not be intended for audiences. Grotowski's para-theatrical phase is an example, more ritualistic than artistic, not intended for public performances but seen as a platform for 'impulses' to take place, 'breaking down the rules of theatre, and making a performance without actors and audience' (Cynkutis, 2015, p.27). For example, actions such as 'sudden immersion in water, dances around the fire, passing of fire from person to person, running through the forest at night', resemble initiation rites rather than theatre (Schechner, 1985, p.105). Writer Jenna Kumiega participated in such para-theatrical activities and in a personal communication on the 27 January 2017, she confirmed that the end of paratheatrical workshops incorporated no cool-down for its participants:

> the ending of the projects was often abrupt. In the case of the Mountain Project, we were taken back to Wroclaw in a van, after having lived in what

> felt like a parallel universe for a few days, and that was that. I remember walking the Wroclaw streets, with one of the other participants, feeling like an alien who had landed on the earth, and behaving in a way that would generally be viewed as abnormal (Kumiega, email communication).

Kumiega's account confirms that even practitioners as conscious and intentional as Grotowski (Schechner, 1983, p.223), would not consider the cool-down at the end of any theatrical or para-theatrical process, despite extensive preparation applied in other parts of the work.

Overall, workshops remain important for performance practitioners, as indicated by the success of the London Actor's Centre, which has been offering workshops since 1978 (Actors Centre, 2020). This is also reflected in workshop related literature: *The Actor and His Body* (1975) by Litz Pisk, *Through the Body* (2001) by Dymphna Callery or Schechner's 'rasaboxes', the acting methodology he developed in the 80s and 90s, taught in workshop form and exclusively delivered by certified instructors (Minnick and Cole, 2009).

Rehearsals

Rehearsals are considered an integral part of Schechner's (1985) seven-part performance sequence, especially in the Euro-American tradition. In contrast, codified performances such as:

> the Mass, Purim spiels, Noh and so on usually demand training but very little rehearsal. It's obvious: If you play the same role over and over again, as in Ramlila, or if there is an orderly, predictable progression of roles that lie before you over the years, as in Noh, the idea of figuring out what to do before hand is unnecessary – double unnecessary if the mis-en-scene is fixed by tradition. But in cultures, like the Euro-American where "originality" is prized (so prized that works are praised simply for being "new") rehearsals are often more important than training (Schechner, 1985, p.19).

The importance of the concept of the 'new' in the Euro-American theatrical tradition highlighted here by Schechner (1985), is in direct contrast with codified performance styles and depends on the mysterious 'creative moments' that emerge during rehearsals, like 'running on a current' (Selbourne, 1983, p.39). However, discoveries made in rehearsals in an

organic way, prior to the blocking of scenes often requires ample time. For example, Michael Booth in *Theatre in the Victorian Age* (1991) notes 'how the psychological dimension, new dramatic characterisation, and more complex texts by Ibsen, Strindberg and Chekhov could not be produced after a few rehearsals. The requirement for more extended and comprehensive rehearsals elevated the role of the theatre director, which became a role of increasing importance' (1991, pp.137-8), also noted in Barton (1984, p.182), leading to a constantly developing variety of rehearsal styles (Marowitz, 1978, pp.23-4).

Notwithstanding the numerous methodological approaches utilised to access those 'creative moments' (Selbourne, 1983), the length of rehearsals remains variable. For example, Alfreds (2007) advocates an average of four to five weeks (2007, p.285), however, Unwin (2004) and Barkworth (1980) recognise the harsh reality: that rarely any company rehearses for more than 3-4 weeks (Barkworth, 1980, p.22); (Unwin, 2004, p.208), whilst Mitchell (2009) acknowledges the possibility of a two week rehearsal period (2009, p.115). When Peter Hall directed *Anthony and Cleopatra* for the National Theatre, despite having a 12-week rehearsal schedule, he started blocking scenes on the third rehearsal (Tirzah, 1990, p.xv), whilst Swain (2011) confirms that Hall asks all actors to learn their lines before the first rehearsal, as this approach 'gives you, in effect, an extra two weeks' rehearsal' (2011, p.71). These examples indicate that even when longer rehearsal periods become available, ideal rehearsal processes sometimes adapt to pragmatic end-result expectations. Finally and to signify the importance of the rehearsal phase even further, Stanislavski used the rehearsal process, during his final artistic period, as a tool for experimentation and research on the 'method of physical actions' (Konjin, 2000, p.9); (Flaszen, 2010, p.305). Despite the variety of discourse in this phase, the cool-down remains absent as a post-rehearsal consideration; with the exception of Wangh (2000) who proposes a four-step process following rehearsals, whereby actors are 'warming down' (2000, p.255).

Warm-up

Filmer (2006) points out that actors perceive preparation as a holistic process because 'unlike visual artists or musicians, the body of the theatre performer is both the means and the ends of her artistic practice' (2006, p.135). This phase comprises of physical and vocal procedures, either in group or individually and is established early in the actor's training regime - with exceptions: Squat Theatre did not partake in rehearsal or warm-up processes to keep performances 'fresh' (Schechner, 1985, p.18). Moreover, Filmer (2006) notes how 'preparation for performance is both multidimensional and profoundly subjective; its particular features are dependent on what each individual performer perceives to be her needs at a given time for a given performance' (2006, p.134). As this phase is positioned immediately before the performance phase, it is meant to physically and mentally prepare the actor for the encounter with the audience. Examples of the comprehensive consideration of the warm-up can be found in Steptoe et al. (1995, p.34), Wangh (2000, pp.36-42) and Barton (2003, pp.39-73).

Pre-performance transitions are so important that they often begin on the way to the theatre, whilst 'walking, cycling, driving, using public transport…vocal preparations might be undertaken whilst driving, or driving might be avoided as mental adjustments are made' (Filmer, 2006, p.116). Moreover, actors are required to be within the theatre space with plenty of time, for example Schechner (1985) indicates that 'Actors Equity, the American Actors union, has a rule requiring actors to be at the theatre one-half hour before curtain' (1985, p.18); the same applies for actors working in Australia (Filmer, 2006, p.126). As a result, the warm-up is seen as an established process that prepares actors mentally and physically in anticipation for the encounter with the audience, as indicated by Orzechowicz (2008, p.153) and Schechner:

> this leap is decisive, a jump over a void of time-space. On the one side of the void is ordinary life, on the other, performance. The warm-up takes

> place on the ordinary-life side, preparing the performer for the leap, giving the performer the courage to jump into performance (2002, p.205).

There are numerous examples confirming the importance and utility of the warm-up. Frantic Assembly uses the warm-up in groups or in pairs to build 'team mentality' and 'setting goals' (Graham and Hoggett, 2009, p.97); Mitchell (2009) indicates that warm-ups are beneficial, regardless of whether they are conducted by specialists in a group setting or individually by the actors themselves (2009, p.95); Unwin (2004) mentions the warm-up as the 'actor's responsibility' (2004, p.117); Schechner's TPG would meet three hours before the performance, even following the opening night, to warm-up, rehearse passages, re-consider notes and talk about the previous performance (Schechner, 1983, p.36). This emphasis in the pre-performance transition and the established practice of the warm-up provides a sharp contrast with the absence of the cool-down.

At the same time, recent research highlights pre-performance stresses as an additional factor to performance ones. The utility of mindfulness in meeting such stresses conducted by performance theorist Daydrie Hague and clinician Mary Sandage (Hague and Sandage, 2016) indicated average pre-performance heart rate activation of 144 bpm, double the average resting heart rate, despite the fact that the actors participating were merely sitting, awaiting their turn to come on stage (2016, p.125). This data corresponds with Konijn's performance activation of up to 180 bpm (2000, p.109), indicating that pre-performance activation, is almost as stressful as the act of performance. Equally, physiological activation should not be seen as a detrimental parameter for actors but one aiding performance (Kaplan, 1969, p.60); (Berry, 1987, p.25). For example, Hague and Sandage (2016) argue that pre-performance activation when channelled properly, assists actors to reach 'optimal…performance' (2016, p.127); a view that corresponds with Giles (2011, p.8). Overall, whilst the warm-up remains a well-practiced phase (Seton, Maxwell and Szabó, 2019, p.134); (Maxwell, Seton and Szabó, 2015, p.92), actors are not taught to view the post-performance phase in the same way.

Performance

The performance phase receives extensive theoretical coverage within Schechner's (1985) sequence, as it represents its apex, where performers encounter the audience. Similarly, Shank (1969) suggests that 'a work of dramatic art is not complete until it is performed for an audience' (1969, p.195) and Grotowski (1968) states that 'theatre cannot exist without the actor-spectator relationship' (1968, p.19), locating this dynamic relationship between audiences and actors at the very heart of performance. Consequently, the intensity of the encounter is inevitably reflected on the performers: despite the rigor of theatre actor training, workshop or rehearsal environments, nothing quite compares with the intensity of a live performance (Konjin, 2000, p.109). How can this intensity be further explained?

Strasberg (1988) points out that 'the very fact of performance creates tension for the actor' (1988, p.125), whilst Schechner (1983) argues that this intensity can be explained by the 'ephemeral' (Barton, 1984, p.182) and fleeting nature of each and every performance:

> experiences that can't be kept, that disappear with each performance, not with each production but with each repetition of the actions I so carefully plan with my colleagues, each repetition that is never an exact duplication no matter how closely scored, how frozen by disciplined rehearsals – this very existence in/as theatre is postmodern (Schechner, 1983, pp.307-8).

There are several examples that confirm the unpredictable nature of the meeting between actors and the audience, including the causing of scandal (Freshwater, 2009, p.26), riots (Melzer, 1994, pp.116-7) and vastly dissimilar responses depending on which part of UK one is performing (Alfreds, 2007, p.297) or which part of the world (Brook, 1972, pp.25-7). The unpredictability of audiences and the constantly negotiated nature of live performance go a long way in explaining the anticipation (prior to the performance), intensity (during the performance) and exertion experienced by actors following a theatre performance.

Moreover, this unpredictability reveals complicity between audiences and actors. For example, Wilshire (1982) notes 'the goal of all involved is that hush of silence which discloses the habitually unspoken, or perhaps the unspeakable' (1982, p.25), whilst Shank (1969) understands this dynamic in similar terms: 'although the audience is not a collaborator, it does make a contribution to the spirit in which its members view a performance…laughter or hushed stillness at certain moments may make a work more compelling' (1969, p.195). Actors perform for an audience that is sometimes viewed as active, as in philosopher Jacques Rancière's *The Emancipated Spectator* (2009) and other times lazy and conservative (Freshwater, 2009, p.54). Either way, during the post-performance phase, actors are not taught to cool-down from the stresses that accumulate during their consecutive warm-up and performance phases.

Cool-down

States (1985) notes that the first step between the performance and the cool-down is the curtain call: 'a decompressor chamber halfway between the depths of art and the thin air of reality…the actors remain in costume but not in character' (1985, p.198). Similarly, Raina (2017) argues that 'the return back from a "temporary self" to the real embodied self is always a delicate matter fraught with concern' (2017, p.67). However, lack of consideration for the post-performance management of the actor's needs, indicates an obvious gap in theatre training for actors:

> when the performance is over Cieslak 'cools down'. Often he drinks vodka, talks, smokes a lot of cigarettes. Getting out of the role is sometimes harder than getting into it. Little work has been done on the 'cool-down', at least in the Euro-American tradition. Here the emphasis is on training, rehearsal and warm-up. In Bali, by contrast, there are rituals for cooling down including sprinkling with holy water, inhalation of incense, massage and even sacrifice of animals and blood sprinkling. What the cool-down does is return the performer to an ordinary sphere of existence: to transport him back to where he began…Cieslak knows how to prepare and be ready to flow with his role. But he has hardly any inkling of what to do afterwards (Schechner, 1983, p.97).

Schechner (1983) makes two points here. First, that Cieslak's approach to the cool-down is superficial, improvised, but that the process itself is necessary, because 'getting out of the

role is sometimes harder than getting into it'. Second, Schechner (1983) juxtaposes the overlooked cool-down phase within the Euro-American performing tradition with Eastern performance practices; I consider this point more fully in Chapter 3. Moreover, in an interview on the 21 May 2019, Zaremba-Byrne confirmed that in student and professional theatre settings there is no cool-down, taught or practiced; only immediate socialisation. This asymmetry between the cool-down and the warm-up is reiterated by Kumiega in relation to Grotowski's actors:

> After the performance the actors would shower and change, and then either slip away quietly by themselves, or on occasions a few of them would stay behind to talk to individuals…inevitably, there was plenty of occasion for informal and/or unconscious processes of cool-down in the LT [Laboratory Theatre] work, and I enjoyed participating in some of these over the years: long, sometimes rowdy meals in restaurants, where the seriousness and formalities were abandoned; parties in hotel rooms or private homes with alcohol; wild dancing in night clubs…considering there is so much preparation going into a performance with nothing to support performers at the other end of that performance seems difficult to explain…it makes absolute sense to take on board the need for conscious cool-down processes, particularly if you are aware of and accept the need for an appropriate preparation and "warm-up" (Panoutsos, 2017, p.19, p.21).

Despite making 'absolute sense to take on board the need for conscious cool-down processes' the lack of cool-down consideration provides no answer to any of those concerns, leaving actors to utilise their adrenaline fuelled energy, hot states and visceral drives in an improvised way. Equally, the cool-down is not meant to prevent actors from smoking, drinking or engaging 'in wild dancing in night clubs', but to meet the actors' immediate post-performance needs, prior to any such socialisation or provide the agency to 'slip away by themselves' to their private sphere. In other words, it is the ordered transition itself that should inform actors on the nature and duration of their immediate post-performance socialisations, allowing them the agency to place their needs first, above other considerations or pre-set social arrangements.

Aftermath

For Schechner (1985), aftermath is even less mentioned than the cool-down and embodies two concepts, a) 'theorizing and scholarship', which 'feeds back into performing', as well as

the b) long-term effects of performing a role 'over and over again' (Schechner, 1985, p.19). In regards to the first concept, the emergence of Performance Studies as a new academic discipline in the 1980s (Schechner, 2002, p.16), solidified academic cross-pollinating processes between a variety of disciplines and researchers, such as sociologist Erving Goffman (1959), psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (1975), anthropologist Victor Turner (1982; 1987), ethnographer Margaret Thompson Drewal (1992) and anthropologist Catherine Bell (1992; 1997). This cross-pollinating platform however, does not eradicate the distinction between criticism and practice, also noted by Strauss [1959] (2008): 'there is a division of labour in artistic worlds whereby certain persons, themselves not artistically skilled, earn the right to interpret the products of those who are skilled' (2008, p.71) and Shank (1969) who acknowledges criticism and theory as complimentary but distinct processes: 'artists are interested in creating works of art, not in theorising about them: a work of art is something, while criticism and theory are about something' (1969 p.4).

Notwithstanding the importance of aftermath in terms of 'theorising' which 'feeds back into performing' (Schechner, 1985, p.19), the act of performance itself remains the primary consideration in theatre making because 'works of art are not created according to theory: rather, theories are made according to works of art' (Shank, 1969, p.2). For example, Frantic Assembly state that they 'have never heard of Artaud', did not receive formal training and cite their biggest artistic influence the company's transit-van used for touring (Graham and Hoggett, 2009, pp.24-30). This account suggests that within creative processes the agency of the artist remains primary: 'the artist does not look to the theorist for guidance in his attempt to express what he understands of human feeling, to convey his conception of the human condition. He does not use principles or theories as recipes in the creation of a work of art' (Shank, 1969, p.1). Along the same lines, Pina Bausch has expressed the need to refrain from talking directly about the process of art creation:

> sometimes it's just an idea or a thought…I suddenly get the feeling that if I talk about it too much then I've dirtied it already. I can't say why that is. And then I always have this feeling that I must protect it. I must talk around it so that it remains untouched (Huxley and Witts, 2005, p.61).

Despite Bausch's and other artists' reservations on the intellectualisation of their process, theoretical approaches to performance remain pertinent. For example, British theorist Raymond Williams' work *Drama in Performance* (1954) became the catalyst between audiences and artists in conceptualising 'the study of performance as a necessary and integral part of the study of theatre' (Huxley and Witts, 2005, p.419). Likewise, would modern dance attain the status of a prominent contemporary art in the USA, without the contribution of American critic and reviewer John Martin and his highly influential *The Modern Dance* (1933) and *Introduction to the Dance* (1939), instrumental in encouraging audiences to engage with an emerging art form (Huxley and Witts, 2005, p.302)? By encompassing the feedback mechanism between theory and practice, aftermath remains important for audiences, performers, art theorists, reviewers and academics.

The second meaning of the Schechner's (1985) term aftermath refers to a post-performance phase; however, its timescale is not immediate. Instead, the actors' aftermath is more related to the de-role or 'emotional hangover' following the end of the performance run (Sacay-Bagwell, 2013, p.22), what Szlawieniec-Haw (2020) calls 'long-term emotional lingerings' (2020, p.54); (Wolf, 2018, p.4); (Jones, 2014, p.3), not following each and every performance. During the performance run, actors require keeping the role alive within them, inclusive of their text, songs, dance routines and fight sequences. In contrast, the aftermath or de-role - despite it being often used interchangeably with the cool-down (Taylor, 2016, p.199) - is a distinct process where 'with self-awareness, time, and/or personal and interpersonal care…long-term character lingerings generally fade away' (Szlawieniec-Haw, 2020, p.56), a process which 'takes anywhere from three weeks to a month' (Mandell, 2017, p.38).

Initial findings

The three sets of literature presented in this chapter, confirm that the concept of the post-performance cool-down is neglected and its practice remains unknown by actors, with none of the eight cool-down approaches systematically utilised following professional theatre performances. The second set of sources provides valuable insights into the concerns for the actors' mental health and their professionalization; however, those are distinct from the immediate post-performance exertion. The third set provides a wealth of material on all aspects of the performance sequence, with the exception of the cool-down. Overall, the secondary sources presented and discussed in this chapter, indicate that the actors' immediate post-performance phase continues to receive little attention, whilst the field remains under-researched.

In the next chapter, the nature of the actors' post-performance needs are examined more particularly and distinguished from those of athletes and dancers. Also, it is argued that live performances should be considered distinct experiences due to the presence of the audience, representing the most important exertion parameter for actors, over and above other parameters, such as acting methodological approaches or rehearsal processes.

2. Post-performance stresses reflected in literature

Introduction

In the previous chapter, the post-performance phase in general and the cool-down in particular were presented as considerations that remain largely absent from the actors' training and practice, despite literature verbalising their necessity and potential, in both training and professional settings. In contrast, the warm-up and the cool-down in sport (Shellock and Prentice, 1985), as well as in dance (Malliou et al., 2007), are well established discourses - although Malliou et al. (2007) points out that 'contradictory findings have been reported in literature' (2007, p.30), also noted by Hooren and Peake (2018, p.1575). Moreover, Martin and Cutler (2002) note the:

> many similarities [that] also exist between sport and theatre. To achieve excellence both activities require long hours of practice over many years. Sustaining motivation over time in the face of failure and disappointment also is important. Both actors and athletes are responsible for their performances, which occur in socially evaluative settings (i.e., in front of audiences) (2002, pp.344-5).

In view of some similarities identified, could actors adapt existing cool-down processes that athletes utilise, in order to engage with systematic cool-down processes during their post-performance phase? This question is necessary, as an affirmative response could incorporate the utilisation of existing cool-down practices, borrowed or partially modified from dance or sport, to fit the actor's needs. However, at present, there is no literature suggesting the borrowing or modifying of cool-down processes from sport to the theatrical post-performance phase. This absence can be explained in the dissimilar nature of education, physical intensity and post-performance needs between actors and athletes or dancers.

Education

Education is a primary factor in the systematic adherence of warm-up and cool-down practices by athletes and dancers, exposed to such routines since childhood, in order to prevent injuries (Malliou et al., 2007). In contrast, actors' training begins in adulthood (Grotowski, 1969, p.50); (Prior, 2012, p.210), whilst dancers as young as 8 (Hamilton, 1997, pp.1-2) are known to 'devote between 17 and 23 hours per week to it' (Bowerman, et al., 2015, p.52). Similarly with dancers, athletes begin 'unstructured' sporting activities by early childhood (between the ages of 2 and 5), intensifying during 'middle childhood' between the ages of 5 and 10 (Lloyd et al., 2015, pp.9-10).

Physical intensity

Intensive training from early childhood means that by the time athletes and dancers reach adulthood, they have already accumulated 10 to 15 years of intense physical activity (Hamilton, 1997), explaining the necessity as well as incorporation of systematic warm-up and cool-down practices. Moreover, this accumulation is significant, reflected in high rates of injury, amongst other issues: 'rate of growth in elite adolescent ballet dancers is likely associated with a small to moderate increase in risk of lumbar and lower extremity overuse injury' (Bowerman et al., 2014, p.239), whilst in a later study she points out: 'primary risk factors identified included maturation, growth, and poor lower extremity alignment. Strong evidence from well-designed studies indicates that young elite female ballet dancers suffer from delayed onset of growth, maturation, menarche, and menstrual irregularities' (Bowerman et al., 2015, p.1). Examples of this accumulation are also reflected in the under-reporting of their over-training, which can have physiological and psychological implications: 'overtraining syndrome, which is identified by prolonged maladaptation of biological, neurochemical and hormonal systems. In addition to physiological concerns, overtraining can have serious psychosocial consequences and may require substantial time for a young athlete to make a full recovery' (Lloyd et al., 2014, p.4).

In other words, athletes' and dancers' post-performance needs are primarily characterised by intense and systematic physical intensity, accumulating over several years, explaining the regular use of warm-up and cool-down practices to manage those stresses. In contrast, actors do not face similarly prolonged or intense physical activity, as they begin their training much later than athletes or dancers, and the nature of this activity is much less intense in comparison. Although there are fewer studies systematically reporting the physical injuries of actors compared with studies conducted for athletes and dancers, 'in a student sample dancers had the greatest frequency of injuries, followed by musicians and then actors' (Thomson and Jaque, 2017, p.339). Moreover, following adulthood, the performing artists recording the highest rates of injury are 'musicians and dancers' (Thomson and Jaque, 2017, p.328), confirming that the nature of their physical activity remains more intense compared to that of actors. Subsequently, in the absence of physical activity of similar intensity to that of dancers or athletes, the cool-down phase fails to develop into a necessary and structured process for actors.

Dissimilar post-performance needs

At the same time, the actor's post-performance exertion is not confined to merely physical demands (Entertainment Assist, 2016); (Thomson and Jaque, 2017). By utilising secondary sources and examining the particular nature of the actor's preparation and process on stage, this point becomes central in this chapter, shedding light into the multifaceted nature of the actors' post-performance needs, explaining the absence of cool-down adaptations from sport and dance, which would only reap limited rewards for actors.

To better understand the nature and particularity of the actors' needs, the rest of this chapter is divided in three main sections. In the first (1.*The actors' post-performance stresses*), I examine the specific parameters of the actors' stresses. In the second (2.*The role of training,*

rehearsal and performance in post-performance exertion), I argue that there is no correlation between the nature of post-performance exertion and the choice of methodological approaches utilised by actors. Instead, I propose that it is the anticipation, as well as the act of performance itself that is directly related to the nature of those stresses. In the third section (3.*The concern of burn-out in actors*), I highlight examples of post-performance exertion and burn-out recorded in secondary sources. This last main section argues that theatre practitioners failing to systematically consider the post-performance phase, are effectively unable to recognise and meet their physical, emotional, mental and social needs, to the detriment of their health and professional objectives.

1. *The actors' post-performance stresses*

Physical/Emotional

Although actors are unfamiliar with the physical intensity undertaken by athletes or dancers, they do experience physical exertion. For example, Hague and Sandage (2016) note pre-performance activation, with 'resting heart rates averaged 144 bpm' (2016, p.125) and Konijn (2000) recorded performance activation with heart rates up to 180 bpm (2000, p.109). To withstand such stresses, actors are required to remain in top physical condition: 'the most important thing for an actor is physical strength. Without physical endurance an actor cannot complete a performance' (Nakamura, 1990, p.91). Moreover, physiological activation of this intensity implies a direct relation to the emotional stress of performing in front of a live audience:

> acting clearly involves a higher than normal state of arousal, including physiological signs such as increased heart-rate and breathing. After an intense performance we can feel as sweaty and exhausted as after a work-out…at the very least we can experience an adrenaline rush due to the fact that we are in front of an audience. On a good night our arousal can sometimes reach the level of ecstasy (Scheiffele, 2001, pp.184-5).

Scheiffele (2001) explains this activation by using the correlation between the presence of live audiences and the onset of adrenaline rush, corresponding with Morris's view: 'if you are

performing your adrenaline increases, cortisol increases, your senses become more heightened you are in an altered state of consciousness' (Morris, zoom interview). Moreover, I argue that hormonal activation is only one of the parameters that deserves attention; the other two include the importance of the diaphragm for actors and the understanding of visceral drives (hunger, thirst, pain, exhaustion) and hot states (emotions that linger on).

The diaphragm

Vocal projection represents a central preoccupation for actors. This is because actors do not merely communicate the behaviour of their role from the embodiment of specific movement patterns, but primarily from speech and song - for example actor Daniel Day-Lewis is known to always begin the process of finding the character through the voice (Jones, 2014, p.4). However, voice production is not a preoccupation that merely concerns the area of the larynx, but the whole organism of the actor, including physical functions such as 'breathing' and 'diction', as well as psychophysical challenges of remaining open in order the actor is able to 'penetrate and reveal himself' (Grotowski, 1968, p.36). Donnellan (2002) also makes a special mention on the importance of breathing: 'she needs to train her breathing technique to support any long thought. Her breathing muscles need to be fit…this work has to be done early in her invisible work and as part of her general training as an actor' (2002, pp.157-8).

This 'invisible work', amongst other things, entails the controlling of respiration and the supporting of the voice, both functions requiring the awareness and training of the muscles responsible - for breathing-in: the diaphragm and intercostal muscles; for breathing-out: the inner abdominal muscles (Lugering, 2012, p.111). However, this awareness and training can be of little use with a full stomach and an active digestive process:

> food also affects one's performance. A kabuki actor usually eats very light lunch. If he eats a lot he'll get sleepy, and it might also be difficult to speak. If ones stomach is too full it becomes painful to project one's voice from the diaphragm. So usually actors just nibble on a sandwich or some noodles…when an actor is playing a big role, over the course of the month he will generally lose from three to five kilograms (Nakamura, 1990, p.92).

Nakamura (1990) here explains that to prevent the actor from feeling sleepy during the performance, experience pain or/and difficulty in speaking, the management of pre-performance eating habits becomes a central pre-performance concern. A similarly pertinent account is provided by Theatre Odin actor Else Marie Laukvik: 'we go to eat after the performance because we're hungry, we haven't eaten for six or seven hours' (Christoffersen, 1993, p.169), whilst actor Danny Hoch confirms this pre-performance consideration: 'for an eight o'clock show, I do not eat after one-thirty in the afternoon, although I drink a lot of water' (Luckhurst and Veltman, 2001, p.46). Likewise, in an interview on the 21 May 2019 Zaremba-Byrne confirmed that there is an explicit instruction for student actors not to consume food after half-past five in the afternoon, when there is a performance later that evening.

These accounts indicate that the intense use of the diaphragm on stage necessitates the restriction and control of food intake, within timeframes that range between 3 and 6 hours prior to performance. In addition, although managed food intake is a common pre-occupation for actors, it is difficult to normalise: 'I can't wait to get back into a normal routine…I don't know when to eat anymore' (Filmer, 2006, p.125). As a result, actors attempt to apply simple pre-performance rules, restricting themselves to small meals or no meals, confirming the importance of control in this area (Thomson and Jaque, 2017, p.367). Moreover, due to the frequency of stage performance, up to 8 times a week, food intake management is regularly required, to ensure that the diaphragm can properly support the actors' breathing and voice throughout each and every performance. Importantly, this kind of regular food management may exacerbate the onset of hunger and other visceral drives.

Visceral drives and hot states

De Ridder et al. (2014, p.1) distinguishes between 'hot states like emotions or visceral drives' and Williams et al. (2016) defines examples of visceral drives (thirst, hunger, pain, fatigue);

both known to affect behaviour when experienced. Emotions following the performance linger on (Konijn, 2000); (Nicholson, 2013), whilst the onset of visceral drives is an interrelated concern with that of the diaphragm. This is because managing food consumption during the pre-performance phase, contributes to intense post-performance feelings of hunger; a visceral drive, which may lead to 'discrepancies between self-interest and behaviour' (Loewenstein, 1996, p.272). In addition to hunger, thirst (another visceral drive) is also known to be a powerful experience: 'in the case of men in traumatic shock thirst rises to first place as a cause of suffering. Men in shock complain bitterly of thirst; they much less frequently complain of pain' (Beecher, 1946, p.104).

At the same time, there is also evidence that, although 'hot states do increase impulsivity but that impulsivity is not necessarily bad' (De Ridder et al., 2014, p.7). However, 'overwhelming amount of evidence exists indicating that people become more impulsive and opt for immediate gratification of their desires when they are emotional, hungry, sexually aroused or otherwise in a hot state' (De Ridder et al., 2014, p.1), also confirmed by Williams et al. (2016): 'our work suggests that, at times, a person's…behaviour may have less to do with who they are as a person and more to do with whether they have recently exercised, eaten, or slept' (2016, p.901).

What are the ramifications of this research for actors during the post-performance phase? In addition to the neglecting of their immediate post-performance needs, actors not entirely in control of their immediate post-performance behaviour may fail to present themselves favourably within professional or private contexts. Greater control of this phase would take into account that the physical sensation of hunger or thirst is known to alter one's state, into what psychologists call visceral drives:

> visceral drive states, like hunger, thirst, fatigue, pain and an assortment of cravings, are generally adaptive physiological signals that something

> important for survival is wrong or lacking. Visceral states are quite powerful: they can affect memory and prediction…empathy for suffering [and] engender a sort of "motivational myopia"—a focus on the goal of alleviating the visceral state at the expense of other important goals (Williams, et al., 2016, p.897).

The power of visceral drives aptly described here explains post-performance hunger, thirst, pain or fatigue as important triggers known to affect 'memory', 'prediction' and 'empathy'. The awareness and management of visceral drives would be of benefit to actors, especially during the immediate post-performance phase, when they are engaging with professional socialisation, related to desirable carer outcomes (Mast, 1986, p.136).

Hormonal changes and the role of adrenaline

Another post-performance physical consideration is related to the hormonal changes that take place prior and during a theatre performance (Konijn, 2000, pp.73-4), noted by several researchers (Christoffersen, 1993); (Scheiffele, 2001); (Murphy and Orlick, 2006); (Orzechowicz, 2008); (Taylor, 2016); (Wolf, 2018). For example, Odin actor Torgeir Wethal confirms the importance of such post-performance considerations:

> after the most physically active productions…I have almost demanded the right to have time to myself after the performance was over. The worst thing that would happen was if someone came and bothered me in the first ten minutes that were mine and mine alone. It's a combination of the fact that you are living on an inner level during the performance and that the physical action pattern develops and often increases in intensity towards the end of the performance. This affects you on many levels. Your adrenaline is going strong and you are physically exhausted. In fact, as far as your consciousness is concerned, you are on another level. I sometimes think 'What on earth would happen if you didn't come out of this state?'(Christoffersen, 1993, p.180).

Wethal here links 'inner' and 'physical' levels of exertion, indicating that the physical intensity of a performance corresponds to a similarly activated 'inner level', explaining the need for a strong post-performance marker during 'the first ten minutes'. To describe the displacement experienced he uses words such as 'inner level', 'consciousness', 'adrenaline' and 'physically exhausted', further indicating the unity of emotional and physical exertion, whilst lamenting the lack of allocated time to himself, suggesting an absence of established protocols during the post-performance phase.

Moreover, these stresses do not only occur during performances but also during the pre-performance phase (Hague and Sandage, 2016); this corresponds with Taylor (2016) when describing hormonal activation at auditions, as similarly intense to performances:

> the audition exposure was found to have a significant effect on the ratings of stress and arousal, as well as substantial changes in blood pressure. The degree to which participants were concerned about conditions of social-evaluative threat (negative judgement by others) was reported to be positively related to the engendered cortisol response—cortisol being a hormone released in response to acute stress (Taylor, 2016, p.108).

Despite this regular exposure to elevated heart rates (Konijn, 2000); (Hague and Sandage, 2016) and hormonal changes (Taylor, 2016), actors are not taught to appreciate its effects nor properly manage this parameter during the post-performance phase. This is despite the confirmation of such activation in the quantitative tradition, including the measuring of heart rate and blood pressure on actors beginning as early as 1942 (Villiers, 1942; 1968) and more recently complemented with new instruments (Weisweiler, 1983; 1985); (Dienstbier, 1989) verifying hormonal changes amongst other symptoms, such as 'accelerated heartbeat, changes in breathing…sweating and blushing' (Konijn, 2000, pp.73-4). For Konijn (2000), 'the general conclusion of such research is that stress situations lead to high level of physiological activation' (2000, p.74). This is how the Endocrine Society describes these symptoms:

> when a stressful situation occurs and your heart begins to race, your hands begin to sweat, and you start looking for an escape, you have experienced a textbook case of fight-or-flight response. This response stems from the hormone adrenaline. Also called epinephrine, this hormone is a crucial part of the body's fight-or-flight response (Hormone Health Network, 2018).

The 'stressful situation' for actors in this context does not only include the performance itself but also the anticipation of performance, what Giles (20111) interchangeably calls 'stage-fright' or 'performance anxiety' (2011, p.5). At the same time, pre-performance and performance stresses, including hormonal activation, should not be seen as merely negative symptoms that require suppression, but as necessary states that assist actors when properly

managed. For example, Hague and Sandage (2016) point out that 'pre-preparatory arousal is an important physiological state that likely contributes to optimal audition performance, as long as the arousal state is well managed by the actor' (2016, p.127) and similarly, for Giles (2011) 'a certain degree of stage-fright is indispensable for a high-quality and engaging performance, as has actually been confirmed by some studies' (2011, p.8). Likewise, States (1985) points out that 'the danger the actor experiences is necessary if there is to be an art of acting' (1985, p.121). Berry's (1987) view on managed stress is in agreement with this approach: 'relaxation in itself is not a virtue, for we have to come to terms with the fact that there is tension which we require in acting which is positive and a good one, for it is to do with the wish to communicate' (1987, p.25).

In other words, anticipated and well managed pre-performance stresses can provide the necessary fuel for actors prior to a theatre performance; 'sweating, heightened senses, rapid breathing, decreased ability to feel pain, increased strength and performance, dilated pupils, feeling jittery or nervous' (Cafasso, 2018); these do not have to be seen as negative symptoms to overcome, but useful ones to utilise. For example, actors would generally welcome the experiencing of symptoms such as 'increased strength' and 'heightened sense', prior to and during a theatre performance, because this activation assists actors to negotiate the challenges of performance. However, the adrenaline symptom 'decreased ability to feel pain' indicates that actors sustaining an injury during a performance - within the context of reduced perception of pain, as well as the absence of a systematic post-performance physical cool-down that would assess the actors' physical state - would miss the opportunity to acknowledge their injury in a timely fashion (Cafasso, 2018), as powerfully indicated by Price (2006, p.164). Similarly, Szlawieniec-Haw (2020) also refers to the impact of adrenaline during the post-performance phase as a significant concern:

> the post-performance high disappeared for many participants and was replaced by a feeling of being completely drained. Others encountered a

> unique form of post-performance energy, especially when they engaged in theatre productions. When encountering this post-performance energy, participants experienced bodily responses to the adrenaline of being onstage yet felt physically, mentally and emotionally sapped...even without this physical adrenaline, however, some other participants found themselves unable to turn off their thoughts and relax (2020, p.44).

Szlawieniec-Haw (2020) points out that when the performance is complete, in the absence of a systematic management of the post-performance phase, actors are unable to manage the transition from their hormonal activation (feeling high) to the feelings of being 'drained' and 'sapped' (feeling low). Moreover, 'after the stress has subsided, adrenaline's effect can last for up to an hour' (Hormone Health Network, 2018). The lingering on of this hyper state is aptly described by actor Judy Dench: 'You're all right for about an hour and a half and then you feel pretty flat…I can't go straight to sleep. I couldn't go home, walk straight up the stairs and get into bed and sleep' (Bates, 1986, p.199). It is worth reiterating here that the management of pre-performance hormonally induced physiological activation already exists in the process of the warm-up, which amongst other things accommodates the stresses associated with the 'mental adjustments [that] are made' (Filmer, 2006, p.116) and stage-fright (Steptoe et al., 1995); (Giles, 2011). A systematic and structured post-performance protocol can provide actors a way to cool-down without alcohol or cigarettes (Mandell, 2017, p.42); (Seton, Ian Maxwell and Szabó, 2019, p.134), whilst managing hormonal activation in order to make a more controlled transition into everyday sociality and the private sphere.

Mental post-performance exertion

Mental post-performance needs are reflected in a variety of ways in secondary sources. One, is the regular transition between self and role or identity management, what Mirodan (2019) calls a 'transformation…first and foremost an act of imagination. I consider imagination in this context to be a psychophysical process, involving the body-mind of the actor in an uninterrupted flow of mutual reinforcement, a spiral of physical changes leading to psychological insights, which in turn cause further physical alterations' (2019, p.3). Another mental concern pertains to the regular and consecutive exposure of the actor's self, what

Grotowski (1968) calls 'truth' and 'authenticity' (1968, p.195). A third one, is related to the actors' need to self-review the performance just completed, not only as an inevitable part of artistic process (Luckhurst and Veltman, 2001, p.130, p.152); (Hagen, 1973, p.18), but also as way of distancing themselves from character: 'by entering a critical work headspace, some participants were able to step out of their characters' experiences and look at performances from a more detailed-oriented perspective. Talking critically about the work helped these participants distance them from lingering emotions and character elements' (Szlawieniec-Haw, 2020, p.99). These mental challenges, namely, identity management, exposure of self and self-review will be discussed in the following subsections.

Identity management

Following Van Gennep (1960, p.11), Turner (1987, p.101) actors do not simply move from a fixed identity (themselves) into a contested identity (the role), but find themselves within that liminal space on stage, between identities, where performers are not themselves, nor the role they are playing, what Schechner (1983) calls the 'double negative…not me…not not me' (1983, p.227). Along the same lines, Barker (1977) suggests that:

> the actor can be said to operate between two poles of activity; the child's explorative play on the one hand and paranoia on the other. The child explores, imaginatively, situations of time and space that he has not directly experienced…the paranoiac believes himself to have an identity other than the one society gives him (Barker, 1977, p.212).

Barker's understanding of this dual capacity to exist in a fictive state but at the same time control the actions pertinent to the performance score, describes the nature of the liminal space, where actors are neither themselves nor their character, but something projected in the audience's 'suspension of disbelief' (States, 1985, p.206). In this way, their true identity is momentarily suspended and dynamically re-negotiated by the audience and the other actors on stage, for the duration of the performance.

Meanwhile, the audience wants to believe in the actor's transformation and theatrical storytelling and perceives the several layers of the actor's identity into one, the character: 'he is not actually the character, he plays the role and does it so well that you mistake him for the character: the illusion is yours alone, he knows himself that it is not real' (Konijn, 2000, p.53). Nakamura (1990) also talks about the combination of total engagement and control:

> at the same time that you are acting you always have to imagine that you are watching yourself on a television monitor. Even at the height of passion or when you are most absorbed in your role you must be able to preserve this cool-eye. It is important for all actors to have this capacity (1990, p.93).

Consequently, actor-training is geared towards the development of a mechanism utilised during performances, where actors act totally but at the same time observe, critique and modify in real time, in control but impulsive too, what Mast calls 'a schizoid state' (1986, p.126). Wilshire (1982) also notes this duality as a process, whereby:

> actors train themselves to slide into this "hot-spot" of mimetic interfusion and involvement. This blurring of the body-self's act of experiencing and the object experienced has a vitally important corollary: since the distinction is essential not only for distinguishing self and other, but also for distinguishing a present act of remembering from a past event remembered, the blurring of individual identity will go hand in hand with a blurring of time and change (Wilshire, 1982, p.157).

This blurring of 'body-self' is also confirmed by actor Vanessa Redgrave (1991): 'every actor knows such moments where the conscious and the subconscious blends' (1991, p.161) and States (1985) indicates this multiplicity of identity, not in binary terms but in triadic form: the actor has 'three phenomenal states: The actor (I) speaks to the audience (you) about the character (he) he is playing' (1985, p.124). Similarly, theatre maker Gao Xingjian commenting on Chinese Opera also considers acting in a triadic form, what he calls the 'tripartition of performance…acting is nothing more than the unceasing quest for equilibrium between the actor as a human being, the neutral actor and the role' (Labędzka, 2008, p.72).

Moreover, not only these actor-related transitions are inevitable, but audiences expect actors to violate 'the norm of behaviour we call "being oneself"' (States, 1985, p.159), in what essentially is an act of collective imagination:

> the presentational basis of theatre rests upon a double pretence: the play pretends we don't exist (the fourth wall convention) and we pretend that the play does (the willing suspension of disbelief). So it is always a pleasant shock when actors emerge from the wings…called by our applause, and stand before us unmasked, as themselves, villain and hero hand in hand (States, 1985, p.206).

In addition to States's (1985) 'suspension of disbelief', Mast (1986) points out that within the spectrum of 'alteration of self-identity' required for any professional to complete their job, actors require maximum alteration, suggesting working demands particular to actors (Mast, 1986, pp.120-2). This is because the embodiment of a variety of behaviours takes place off-centre in relation to the actors' own behaviour and thus it is neither easy nor natural:

> every actor works from a centre. Not so esoteric as the soul, for the actor's work is practical, the centre is a working, moving base for action. Often it is not used consciously, rather it is an intuitive guiding source of energy from which the actor works, acts and lives…like soul, centre is difficult to define, too slippery to pin down effectively in words (Bates, 1986, pp.170-1).

Furthermore, this off-centre performing is a prerequisite, as 'the actor cannot become more of an actor by embodying and performing the same identity on stage - one can only become more of an actor by taking on diverse dramatic identities' (Mast, 1986, p.122). Similarly, McConachie confirms the distinct nature of the actor's work:

> there's no doubt that actors' brains differ in important ways from the brains of accountants, cab drivers, and neurosurgeons'…but exactly how and why, no one knows yet. Is this a good thing, or is it psychologically harmful? I suppose it depends on your point of view…it's not hard to imagine that some characters could draw actors into situations, thoughts, and emotions that could be temporarily dangerous and even harmful to them over the long term (Mandell, 2017, pp.39-40).

With those considerations in mind, the warm-up should be seen as preparing and accommodating liminality, the dynamic re-negotiation of identity that takes place on stage by 'themselves, other actors and theatregoers' (Mast, 1986, p.172), whilst the cool-down should

ensure the actors' safe return from the exertion of liminal space, into the demands of everyday social interactions and the private sphere.

At the same time, it is important to highlight that actors understand and generally adhere to this principle by default: a role or character exists within the specific context of the artistic performance. During my stage experience, I have neither experienced identity blurring nor noted it on any of my colleagues; this is not surprising: 'dramatic actors, like any social actors, experience alternations of identities…they take on different characters without losing sight of the self which underlies these enactments' (Mast, 1986, p.176). This is also confirmed by actor and movement head of R.A.D.A. Shona Morris:

> [actors] go into the dressing room and they sit down and they take off their wig or they take off their make up or take their costume off, or they…there is a process going on, that coming back to the person that you are as opposed to the person you played…the dresser comes round and collect the clothes, they take the mic off, the sound engineer tells you to stand up to take the mic off. All of that divesting is like taking your mask off, like coming back to yourself (Morris, zoom interview).

Similarly, Szlawieniec-Haw (2020) points out: 'while my participants identified that they made their characters' emotions and journeys real for themselves as they performed, at the same time, they stayed aware that they were, in fact, performing' (2020, p.25).

Bates (1986) also points out the importance of having a strong sense of self, whilst undertaking these transitions: 'our whole true self is not the same as the self which fits a particular role. If this happens, the person loses contact with the deeper sources of their own being. Life itself becomes a continuing series of role-plays, behind which the person's true self is denied' (Bates, 1986, pp.96-7). Such an example is provided by a stage actor who 'stayed in character during the entire run of the show, she felt no different on stage than she did in her daily routines, which made her constantly miserable' (Sacay-Bagwell, 2013, p.23).

Likewise, Murphy and Orlick (2006) indicate the necessity not to 'lose yourself' and instead 'fall in love with character' (2006, p.105), implicitly making a clear distinction between themselves and the role, also an important distinction for Morris: 'there is something interesting to be said, because what [actors] may not be paying attention to is how you sort of regather yourself inwards emotionally, not only as actors but also as people' (Morris, zoom interview).

In other words, actors are required to remain in absolute control, whilst reacting in the moment, with the other actors, the audience and what Gaskill (1988) calls the 'flow of the day' (1988, p.43). The rehearsal and the warm-up phases are not merely necessary to provide the actor the ability to adhere to the performance score with clarity and emotional availability, but also to adapt and 'flow' in real time with the other actors and the audience: 'the actor…experiences…a unified flowing from one moment to the next, in which he is in control of his actions, and in which there is little distinction between self and environment, between stimulus and response, or between past, present, and future' (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975, p.36). This requires actors developing and maintaining a heightened sense of awareness between personal and fictive identities, if they are to be successfully transitioning from one to the other, with the necessary regularity, intensity, flow and adaptability.

Exposure of self

How would we begin to define a term like exposure of self? For Grotowski (1968), it is a conscious act: 'in the most important moment in your role, reveal your most personal and closely guarded experience' (1968, p.196). This act of self-revelation through the actors' fictive identities, because of its regularity, amounts to overexposure. For example, Sir Peter Hall states that 'acting is not imitation, it is revelation. Actors in performance reveal their inner selves' (Bates, 1986, p.62) and Szlawieniec-Haw (2020) similarly points out that 'actors' performances need to be "real" and "honest", not faked' (2020, p.24).

Moreover, actors are fully aware of the necessity for the exposure of self, even if they each define it in slightly different terms. For example, actor Liv Ulman states 'I can never completely hide who I am, what I am. The audience, at the moment of identification, meets a person, not a role, not an actress' (Bates, 1986, pp.116) and actor Charlton Heston points out that the audience remembers actors from one role to the next, whilst looking for parallels between their life and art, 'what your life has done to you – what kind of person it has made you' (Bates, 1986, pp.116-7). This is also confirmed by actor Allan Howard: 'acting is much more a matter of exposing oneself than adopting a mask. The actor performs on his own person, not some illusion; the illusion springs from performing on himself. An actor is worthless if he cannot reveal himself on stage' (Mast, 1986, p.181). Similarly, Hagen (1973) states: 'as an actor, in order to reveal what's at stake for the character on the deepest level and allow for pertinent communication with the audience, I must make myself, for ultimate expression, more vulnerable than life. I want to remove the mask I might normally use as a cover' (1973, p.215). Hagen's necessity for the removal of the everyday mask whilst becoming 'more vulnerable than life', is in correspondence with casting director and acting coach Cathy Reinking:

> don't be afraid to show us the side of you that only you show yourself. We all have one public persona and another that we share with our family and friends. The vulnerable you is the real persona, the person you are when you're alone at night in your personal space, stripped of any pretence. That's what we want to see. You stripped (2012, p.52).

As truthful and meaningful performances incorporate self-revelation, it becomes clear that actors are required to regularly attain a state of vulnerability, where personal truths are revealed through the actions of the performance score, whilst actors and audiences share moment-to-moment insights, what Grotowski (1968) calls 'truth': 'always try to show the unknown side of things to the spectator' (1968, p.195). A post-performance cool-down could

prove useful in dealing with the effects of the exposure of self from consecutive performances.

Self-review

Self-review refers to the post-performance mental process actors regularly undertake, the review of the performance just completed: 'the evaluation of recent performances is frequently necessitated by the fact that they surprise even the actor himself' (Strauss, 2008, p.34). Moreover, Mast (1986), points out that this process of objectification is a familiar one for actors, because it develops within training environments: 'it's like living in a mirror…all the time, people giving you information, information, information about yourself, not about your external being but about me, inside, cut up' (Mast, 1986, p.122). Out of this necessity to cultivate self-awareness and evaluation processes, actors develop strategies that Murphy and Orlick (2006) call 'constant process of assessment'; 'question performance'; 'deal with critics' and 'define purpose for evaluation' (2006, p.105). For example, actor Annabel Arden acknowledges the unavoidable weight of critical self-reflection: 'a professional actor knows when they have performed badly in a show, knows when they have let others down – going home with that burden is part of the actor's life' (Luckhurst and Veltman, 2001, p.6). Arden's 'part of the actor's life' implies actors will experience feelings of failure regularly following theatre performances; this implies the necessity for conscious management during this phase, otherwise actors are in danger losing confidence by overly relying on their 'voice in the head' (Flacks, 2015, p.12).

These concerns become even more pronounced when actors also have to manage their response on written reviews. Actor Anthony Sher points out: 'both good and bad reviews distort one's own image of what he's doing and you have to try not to be too distracted by them…it is hard enough reproducing something night after night, and actors want as little outside interference as possible' (Bates, 1986, p.59). Arden's and Sher's accounts although

both related to the management of post-performance reviews, are distinct. In the first case, Arden talks about the inevitability of poor performances (self-assessed) and their subsequent burden on actors, whilst Sher talks about external reviews. The first type is private, a necessary process of objectification originating from the actor, the second type is external, lay or expert, that can 'distort one's own image'; both concerns however, remain significant for actors.

Consequently, self-review conducted in private during the immediate post-performance phase, can provide actors the agency of a measured self-evaluation, prior to the distorting hyperbole, negative or positive, that actors normally receive from audience members, such as 'directors, agents, loved ones' (Mitchell, 2009, p.214). Along the same lines, actor Hugh Quarshie points out how written reviews can be problematic: 'I think critics are lazy. Michael Bogdanov once did a survey of reviews for his production of Faust. He found an astonishing similarity of phrasing and commentary in the reviewing, which had come from the preface of the Penguin edition of the play and the publicity blurb' (Luckhurst and Veltman, 2001, p.108). Likewise, actor William Dafoe points out:

> I am starting to think of criticism in a negative way because you react to these people and it makes you self-conscious even if the reviews are positive, you harden into an identity and then you have something to protect which will make you less flexible and more likely to come out with a lot of 'I' statements such as 'I must', 'I should' and 'I am'. The same thing can happen with negative criticism; it can make you think 'Oh the fuckers, they think I am terrible, I will show them' (Luckhurst and Veltman, 2001, p.32).

In other words, both written and oral reviews represent challenges for actors, if not consciously managed. This is especially true for actors that remain highly dependent on the opinions of others, expert or not, and may find themselves second-guessing not only the performance score but also their own ability. By asking actors to systematically conduct self-reviewing processes in private, actors retain their artistic agency and manage their own expectations (Hagen, 1973, pp.192-9), reminding themselves that 'you have not finished

making the work' (Mitchell, 2009, p.214). These accounts indicate that actors' work during a performance run is continually in flux and as such, sensitive to external comments. This necessitates the cultivation of the actors' autonomy, which can be assisted by the private reviewing of each and every performance during the immediate post-performance phase, prior to their exposure to positive or negative reviews, oral or written, from lay or expert audiences alike.

Despite the importance of managing identity shifts, exposure of self and external reviews, those concerns are not always explicitly highlighted at training environments. For example, following a Broadway performance of *Spring Awakening* actor Daniel N. Durant admits to playing video games in an effort to mentally unwind following performances, whilst his cast mate usually consumes alcohol and cigarettes (Mandell, 2017, p.38). Similarly, following *Porgy and Bess* actor Phillip Boykin would consume alcohol whilst 'mindlessly watching television' (Mandell, 2017, p.38). Along the same lines, Ben Whishaw admits that he did not learn any cool-down techniques at R.A.D.A:

> sadly, they don't teach you such things at drama school—I wish they did …It's something I'm still learning. I haven't quite mastered it yet. I find that the shower I take after the show is a moment when I tend to let the whole thing go, as the water rushes off my body (Mandell, 2017, p.28).

Those working actors' accounts indicate that even prestigious training environments provide no training in this area and similarly, professional settings do not encourage the employment of cool-down post-performance processes, confirming pertinent observations made by Seton, Maxwell and Szabó (2019).

Social needs following a theatre performance

On top of physical/emotional and mental stresses actors are required to manage following a theatre performance, actors should also consider the challenges of immediate post-performance sociality. This is because the nature of acting work with its irregular working hours, including post-performance networking, exacerbates physical and mental exertion,

which can manifest as sleep disturbance (Entertainment Assist, 2016, p.84); (Szlawieniec-Haw, 2020, p.77) or burn-out (Thomson and Jaque, 2017, p.367). At the same time, alcohol and post-performance networking opportunities go hand-in-hand during the post-performance phase:

> both males and females report alcohol consumption at potentially harmful levels. This finding is consistent with actors' reports, in our survey, of their reliance on alcohol as a means with which to both "cool down" after performance, and to cope with the more acute effects of demanding roles. It also appears that much of the drinking is associated with forms sociality linked to working in this field (Maxwell, Seton and Szabó, 2015, pp.109-10).

In the absence of a gradual process reintegrating actors into everyday sociality, such as the cool-down, actors are expected to have the energy reserves for immediate socialisation following theatre performances. This is in addition to the very public and collaborative nature of the actor's overall artistic process (Shank, 1969, p.28) and performance cycle (Taylor, 2016, p.54), requiring 'a book-ending cool-down counterpoint to warming up' (Seton, Maxwell and Szabó, 2019, p.140).

However, implicit in the public nature of the on and off-stage processes actors are required to undertake, is their need to be able to occasionally switch-off, systematically or on occasion, by becoming less social and more private, in the same way many actors are seeking private moments during their warm-up (Steptoe et al., 1995, p.34); (Murphy and Orlick, 2006, p.105). For example, 'several actors expressed the value of either having a quiet space to themselves (rather than socialising with others) or getting home to their everyday lives as soon as possible. Often this was described as a way of helping them reconnect with their non-performative lives' (Seton, Maxwell and Szabó, 2019, p.136). This indicates that the culturally established post-performance socialisation with members of the audience is not always enjoyable or sought after by all actors, as in the case with actor Else Marie Laukvik:

> I personally don't like suddenly having to live up to an image. This is something you see so much of in the theatre world. You have suddenly done something really good and have to live up to it, like playing a role. You can

> become afraid of no longer being able to satisfy anymore (Christoffersen 1993, p.172).

For Laukvik then, this living 'up to an image' echoes what Mast (1986) calls 'non-dramatic performance management' (1986, p.136); an often unavoidable off-stage self-presentation, also been noted by Hagen (1973):

> imagine yourself attending a cocktail party given for producers, agents, directors, all in a position to employ you. How you feel, how you dress, how you behave will be a you that is different from the you that goes to a party of friends and colleagues in a loft where you sit guzzling wine and beer, and munching on pretzels. In each situation your very idiom changes, your self-image changes (1973, p.25).

These accounts confirm that despite the necessity and intensity of post-performance socialisation, some actors consider it problematic, preferring to be more private than social, often because they simply do not have the energy levels to conduct them. This post-performance concern is also reflected in the 'stage door debate', revealing the current and immediate post-performance dynamic between actors and audiences.

Stage-door debate

Although many actors find post-performance socialisation appealing and actively pursue it or even consider it a cool-down of sorts, others find it unnecessary or even draining their already depleted energy resources. On occasion and when actors place their post-performance recovery process first, they find fans complaining that the actors have ignored them, sparking a 'stage-door' debate (Paskett, 2018), in which actors are having to explain to fans the particularly taxing nature of performing, as in the case of actor Ben Platt:

> performing Dear Evan Hansen is wonderful but also hugely tough – as much as I would like to be out there every night, very often I cannot come to the stage door after the performance. My priority must always be self-care, so I can recreate the same quality show every night. That's my job, and what each and every audience member is paying for and deserves. Before you tweet hateful things about how I don't value our incredible fans when I can't come to the door, please pause to consider that my responsibility is to them first and foremost to give my all each night. I preserve myself because I value each of them deeply (Paskett, 2018).

Platt's message to fans indicates that some members of the audience expect post-performance social performing as standard, indicative of the popular imagination of performing as natural,

effortless and reserved for what Craig calls 'born actors' (Walter, 1983, p.92). This typification of the acting profession is often associated with a glamorised and imagined lifestyle, where 'born actors' are (and enjoy being) nearly always 'on', artistically and socially: 'via its consumption of mass media drama which sometimes includes dramatizations of actors and acting, the public is bombarded by typifications of the occupation, acquiring a false familiarity with it' (Mast, 1986, p.123).

Similarly, States (1985) suggests that whilst the exposure of self on stage is necessary, it does little to adequately describe how actors may be configured off-stage: 'we have the cliché of the egotistical actor. If we are amazed at the phenomenon of the shy actor…it is only because it strikes us as a behavioural oxymoron…if anything, the actor's appearance before the world is the essence of tact and selflessness' (1985, pp.121-2). During the occasional need for privacy and agency to control their post-performance phase, actors often find themselves obligated to explain this 'behavioural oxymoron', their absence from the stage door or give account on the choices pertaining their private lives: 'not appearing at stage door is not "treating fans badly"…stage door is not obligatory, or an entitlement and an actor never owe anyone an explanation as to where they were instead of at stage door' (Paskett, 2018). Actor Carrie Hope Fletcher makes an important point here: 'stage door is not obligatory'. In the absence of systematic and structured cool-down processes, it is telling that this point requires explanation, indicating how blurred these lines may be between actors and audiences during the immediate post-performance phase. Despite the pressures of immediate post-performance socialisation, the post-performance phase belongs to the actor. In other words, actors do not have to be exhausted to decline post-performance socialisation, but should be able to do so as a matter of preference, retaining agency in this area, without the need for further clarification. At present, however, some actors following a theatre performance have the feeling of 'being

misunderstood' and the 'experience [of] an increased level of insecurity around acquaintances and strangers' (Szlawieniec-Haw, 2020, p.53).

In addition, actors are also required to make their transition from artistic and social demands into the private sphere. For example, Szlawieniec-Haw (2020) discovered that: 'participants needed decompression time to process emotions and thoughts related to their work representing *dolesse* that day. In spite of these needs, participants with babies or young children noted that they were generally not able to have transition or decompression time, having to simply jump back into parenting' (2020, p.52). In other words, the post-performance phase encompasses both the transition from the artistic to the social and subsequently from the social to the demands of the private sphere.

Introducing the main post-performance concerns particular to actors reflected in secondary sources, highlight their particularity and nature, whilst distinguishing between immediate (artistic to social) and subsequent (social to private) transitions. The next section examines the impact of actor-related processes, suggesting that post-performance exertion is directly linked to the performance itself, its anticipation and 'danger' (States, 1985, p.121), rather than affected by other parameters, such as rehearsal approaches or training background.

2. *The role of training, rehearsal and performance in post-performance exertion*

In the previous section, vulnerability and the act of self-revelation were seen as fundamental to the actor's work, also confirmed by Alfreds (2007): 'good theatre only happens when the actors are doing their proper job: playing with immediacy, with vulnerability, which means with complete honesty' (2007, p.20). However, this 'vulnerability' and 'complete honesty' is often measured by the intensity and manifestation of emotions on stage (Brandfonbrener,

1992); (Taylor, 2106); (Wolf, 2018). For example, Shank (1969) points out that 'there is a popular belief among theatre-goers that actors do experience such feelings…[whilst] too many actors insist that they "feel their parts"' (1969, 127-8); such perceptions can lead actors to emotional drain. Although Cohen (2004) argues that for 'an actor seeking work in the Western dramatic repertory, mastering role distance is as essential as mastering role embracement' (2004, p.121), the latter approach remains the more popular one (Bloch, 1993); (Chubbuck, 2005, p.ix); (Flacks, 2015, pp.5-6).

However, despite a preference in methods manipulating emotions, this approach to acting is not seen as central by all theatre makers (Noice and Noice, 2002, p.14); (Hetzler, 2008, p.28) and often attracts criticism (Marowitz, 1978); (Soto-Morettini, 2010); (Flacks, 2015), summarised by Shank (1969) 'probably no experienced and talented actor believes that he actually feels the emotion of his character any more than he believes he is actually the fictional personage' (1969, p.126-7). Similarly, Konijn's (2000) emotion task theory concludes that 'actors experience emotions related to the actual situation of live performance. However, these task emotions will not coincide with the character emotions portrayed' (2000, p.146).

Notwithstanding research indicating a more nuanced discourse in regards to emotions experienced by actors on stage, the centrality of emotion continues to be expressed in relatively simplistic terms: 'as an actor, the only thing you can play is emotions. It's the only thing the audience responds to…we're attracted to a strong emotional inner life… dopamine is released when we feel happy or sad and either way we are elated by this. Feeling makes us feel better' (Reinking, 2012, p.42). The perceived centrality of emotional generation and the simplistic terms with which such discourses are conducted, disregarding necessary distinctions between emotion portrayed and emotion experienced (Konijn, 2000), draws

actors towards the utilisation of acting methods known for their systematic manipulation of emotions.

The manipulation of emotions

On the centrality of emotions felt by audiences and actors during a theatre performance, performance theorist Nicholson (2013) points out that:

> emotions are contagious, they act on the body. Like other infections, emotions are both public and private; they temporarily inhabit the intimate spaces of your body but they also multiply, sometimes wantonly, from one person to another. This means that the theatre is a very good place to spread emotions, as actors are intent on them passing on and audiences expect to be infected (2013, p.20).

However, as emotions cannot be summoned at will, several acting methods have developed in the course of the 20th century, with an 'emphasis on the veracity of feeling' (Marowitz, 1978, p.19) and personalisation (Chubbuck, 2005, p.ix). Moreover, some theorists argue that the personalisation of acting approaches leaves actors unable to acknowledge and meet their post-performance needs (Wolf, 2018); (Arias, 2019). For example, Grotowski actor Zbigniew Cynkutis (2015) observes how the emphasis emotion generation can be counterproductive for actors:

> usually these means of expression are bolstered by states of exaltation, hysteria, exhibitionism and psychic narcissism, and engaging these demons is brought about by a longing for believability…this also leads to life problems that turn many actors into people dependent upon alcohol, psychotropic substances and psychiatrists...the price of manipulating the mysteries of the experience of feelings is cruel (Cynkutis, 2015, p.169).

For Cynkutis (2015), 'manipulating the mysteries of the experience of feelings' is problematic in itself, as feelings can rarely be summoned at will without displaying and experiencing 'states of exaltation, hysteria, exhibitionism and psychic narcissism'. Similarly, acting teacher Niki Flacks (2015) points out that:

> the late 60s and 70s climate of Method training encouraged a great deal of not just remembering past abuse and sadness but then talking about it with your teacher and fellow actors – teachers constantly crossed the line and 'played therapist'. They encouraged the revealing of intimate, often horrible past experiences, secrets and then risked the actor's emotional stability in the name of acting (Flacks, 2015, pp.5-6).

Although both Cynkutis (2015) and Flacks (2015) refer to the manipulation of emotion in negative terms, in respect to the actors' long-term health, it is also necessary to add that this may also be detrimental to their artistic process. This is because in theatre making, in contrast with drama therapy objectives (Pitruzzella, 2004), it is less important what the actor feels and more important whether the audience is fully engaging by the action taking place on stage. This point is also made by Diderot in his *Paradoxe sur le Comédien*, that the audience 'does not go to the theatre to see tears, but to hear the words which will bring him to tears' (Konijn, 2000, p. 23). In the same work, Diderot also suggests the absence of blending between self and role, from an actor's point of view: 'The actor is, however, not his character; he pretends to be and does this so well that you mistake him for his character. The illusion is yours alone' (Konijn, 2000, p. 23). Marowitz (1978) points out that this debate between 'real feelings and performed feelings' (Konijn, 2000, p. 23) 'tends to get revived every fifteen or twenty years' (Marowitz, 1978, p.5). However, over and above the theoretical parameters on this debate, in practical terms, it is not the actors' responsibility for what the audience may or may not feel or find believable; the actor's job is to adhere to the performance score, whilst remaining emotionally available - like a conduit of sorts: 'when you give a great performance, you don't feel it was yours; you feel that it came through you...all you can do is prepare correctly' (Zucker, 2002, p.18). In other words, preparation at training or rehearsal environments is one thing, whilst performance represents a completely different context for actors (Konijn, 2000, p.143): 'acting in front of an audience…prevent the actor from losing himself in character-emotions' (2000, p.163). Notwithstanding the methodological approaches utilised to access such emotions in rehearsal, Mandell (2017) points out that 'studies have indicated…that actors' emotions are heightened because of the stress of performing live before an audience, a stress comparable to that experienced by drivers involved in a minor car crash' (Mandell, 2017, p.40). In other words, actors will experience emotions because the audience is present, irrespective of acting methodological approaches or preparation (Konijn, 2000, p.143).

As a result, the necessity for actors to cool-down cannot be ignored: 'from a spectator's point of view, one enters into the experience, is "moved" or "touched" (apt metaphors) and is then dropped off about where she or he entered. For performers the situation is more complex and long-lived' (Schechner, 2002, p.63). Why would actors require longer recovering from a performance than the audience? This is because although Aristotle described what actors do as imitation, Goldman (1975) reminds us that actors are not merely depicting real life on stage:

> the route power of the actor does not reside in his imitative ability. While any good actor is a good mimic, few good mimics are good actors…acting is never simply mimetic; it appeals to us because of some other or more inclusive power. We feel an energy present in any good actor's performance that goes beyond the demonstration of what some "real person" is like (Goldman, 1975, p.5).

Actors do not merely imitate, recite lines and perform actions but are required to embody behaviour, not merely as an external trick but linked with the vulnerable act of self-revelation. For this reason, Alfreds (2007) likens actors to athletes and performances as 'relentless and unstoppable' (2007, p.335). Especially, as the variety of the human condition presented on stage, cannot always be within the easy grasp of each actor, requiring them to transcend their personal limitations.

The transcendence of personal limitations

On the issue of adopting a variety of personas and embodying a spectrum of behaviours, Bates (1986) points out that although actors have: 'familiar, repeated patterns of emotional experience and expression…the work of the actor requires him to forage widely, sniffing, observing, even running along the paths and home ranges of other people…actors have to explore alternative pathways while at the same time retaining contact with their own home range' (1986, pp.98-9). In other words, although actors are required to have emotional availability, a vivid imagination and a flexible body and voice, they are not expected to remain within their familiar range, but are encouraged to cross uncharted waters:

> You are an actor. You want to play Medea – a character who has no problem whatsoever in showing her anger. You begin a speech describing the injustice you've suffered and your desire for revenge. Suddenly you feel your body tense. Your throat constricts. The emotions you understand clearly in the text don't seem to stir. The voice in your head says 'You need to be angry. You need more emotion'. So you scream louder and only end up hurting your throat – the screams seem empty (Flacks, 2015, p.51).

Transcending personal limitations is then expected by actors, over and above all other technical considerations, as the majority of roles will represent personal challenges: 'the actor has only himself at his disposal. He can work only with his emotions, his temperament, his store of memories…but if the character he is portraying contains an intensity of feeling beyond his emotional scope, he must, of necessity, transcend his personal limitations' (Marowitz, 1978, p.14). The necessity to regularly 'transcend…personal limitations' makes acting a test of endurance, each role representing a journey towards uncharted territory, but one which must become familiar.

To negotiate such challenges, Marowitz (1978) suggests that actors require being highly adaptable, in order to be equal to the collaborative process of theatrical art and constantly discover new possibilities. This requires actors going at great lengths during their preparation and performing process, what Bates (1986) calls 'takeover, even subjugation of their selves by outside "characters". They are possessed' (1986, p.70). Moreover, the disproportionate attention given to the experience of emotions and the need to 'explore alternative pathways' (Bates, 1986, pp.98-9), explains some actors' seeking assistance from methods manipulating emotions to display them on cue, such as Bloch's Alba Emoting (1993). However, Chambers laments this perceived unification between the actors' and their characters' emotions as standard; for him, this false typification of the actor's work remains a hindrance, which owes much to the legacy of Strasberg's method acting, as not all acting styles demand this approach (Konijn, 2000, pp.8-12). Although Strasberg's Method became famous for producing exciting results on film, it essentially ended up misrepresenting much of

Stanislavski's System: 'many people don't realise that Stanislavski himself rejected this technique late in his life. He saw actors turning themselves inside out trying to force memories into emotions. Before he died he was exploring other avenues – one of them was working physically' (Flacks, 2015, p.13). In this way, Stanislavski moved on from emotional memory into his powerful theory of physical actions as a preferable way for the actor, as early as 1934 - in the USA however, the creed remained: 'emotion creates action; action creates character; character creates theatre' (Konijn, 2000, p.10).

This way of working, that is, personalisation and the systematic manipulation of emotions, may be suitable for recorded studio work, where short bursts of emotion and charisma play a big part in film acting technique, but may be problematic for stage actors having to conduct performances eight times a week, for weeks and months at a time: 'the method…crippled ten actors for everyone it aided' (Marowitz, 1978, p.12). Similarly, Schechner (1983) argues that psychological approaches to theatre are misplaced: 'the domain of theatre is not, as Stanislavski thought, psychology, but behaviour' (1983, p.308); a point shared by Wilson (1985, pp.52-3). Along the same lines, Artaud (2013) states 'any true feeling cannot in reality be expressed. To do so is to betray it…true expression conceals what it exhibits' (2013, p.51), whilst Marowitz (1978) clarifies: 'Strasberg's blind spot seems to be that the thing one never needs to teach an actor is how to feel: if they have any talent for their art at all, it is the one thing that takes care of itself. To be a human being is to experience emotion' (1978, p.12).

Method acting and the style of detachment

Would such prominence on methodological approaches manipulating emotion imply that actors using non-Method acting approaches - such as Brecht's 'making strange' (*Verfremsdungeffekt*), placing an emphasis on the actors' detachment from their parts - experience reduced post-performance stress states? Such correlation is not supported by evidence. This is because Mast (1986) points out that the choices in methodological

approaches may merely reflect the 'actor's preferred working style' (Mast, 1986, p.157). Furthermore, Konijn's research (2000) concludes that notwithstanding the variety of acting methods or rehearsal systems, there is no correlation between acting methodological approaches during rehearsals and post-performance stress: 'most actors seldom actually experience the emotions they are portraying on stage as they perform a character' and concludes that 'acting style utilised has no bearing on the degree of correspondence between the emotions of actors and characters' (Konjin, 2000, p.17). This is because Konijn (2000) makes a crucial distinction: that between the role and the performance. The Brechtian actor may step outside the role in an effort to prevent identification and serve the needs of the performance score, but cannot remain outside the performance, cannot step off the stage: in the epic theatre the actor still 'shows himself' (Konijn, 2000, p.40) and is therefore susceptible to each performance's stresses. This suggests that it is not the rehearsal process or the actor's preferred methodological approach accounting for post-performance exertion, but the act of performance itself.

Performance seen as a distinct experience

The distinction between the demands of the classroom (Marowitz, 1978, p.12) and performance (Orzechowicz, 2008, p.152) is here reiterated: 'when the director "abandons" the actors on opening night…before the audience can tether the actor in reality, the stage-frightened performer experiences devastating vertigo, free-falling into the abyss of character and losing track of the personal self' (Geer, 1993, p.150). The distinction is also evident in directors' remarks, on how carefully they manage the transition from rehearsal to performance (Unwin, 2004, pp.225-6); (Mitchell, 2009, p.218). This is because irrespective of the technical approach utilised during rehearsals, the main consideration for actors during performances becomes the conducting of the performance score in front of a live audience; not whether their emotions are real or not (Mead, 1967, p.17); also confirmed by Konijn's task emotion theory (2000). This verifies Diderot's assessment, that actors cannot be

concerning themselves with real emotions during performances, but should be working towards 'the dual projects of managing and monitoring the performing body to optimize the creation of emotion in the audience' (Bloch, 1993, p.121).

An additional parameter that makes the utilisation of acting methodologies largely irrelevant in regards to post-performance stresses, is that actors working in the Euro-American tradition may or may not have received formal training (Kemp, 2012, pp.8-14). In addition, few actors utilise any single acting method consistently throughout their careers and some actors claim to use personalised approaches to acting (Luckhurst and Veltman, 2001). For example, Complicite actor Annabel Arden received no formal training, actor Aysan Çelik studied theatre at Harvard, as well as the Method with acting teacher Salome Jens – however, she does not solely rely on the Method when preparing for roles (Luckhurst and Veltman, 2001, p.15). Similarly, actor Miriam Margolyes received no formal training and Antony Sher despite his formal training at Webber Douglas Academy admits 'my acting technique changes all the time' (Luckhurst and Veltman, 2001, p.125). Other actors simply learn by doing, developing their own way of working, as was the case with Laurette Taylor who learned to act through her parents' acting troupe:

> she received no training at all. She learned by watching and experimenting on her own. Every reviewer spoke of her almost magical ability to seem totally real - moment to moment filled with feeling. Late in her life she was cast as Amanda in the premier if Tennessee Williams's *Glass Menagerie*. Critics were ecstatic, calling it the greatest acting ever seen. At the time the Actors Studio and the Method were believed to be the only way to achieve emotional truth. In an interview, however, when she was asked what "techniques" she used, she looked bewildered for a moment. Then she replied: "I just say the words"' (Flacks, 2015, p.98).

These accounts suggest that acting methodological approaches, conscious or unconscious, remain relevant only during the rehearsal period. Once the performance score is fixed, actors focus on its implementation and improvement, night after night, utilising the daily interaction with the audience: 'learn from your audience and let them be your master' (Unwin, 2004,

p.226). Analysis presented in this section suggests that acting styles or performance systems are not primary considerations in regards to post-performance stresses, indicating that the act of performance itself remains the main stressor, due to the presence of the audience.

3. *The concern of burn-out in actors and the role of the cool-down*

Burn-out in actors is not hypothetical but well documented by researchers (Robb, 2017, p.54); (Seton, Maxwell and Szabó, 2019, p.128), defined as a 'syndrome that shares feature of overtraining and staleness…with features that include fatigue, exhaustion, performance decrement, demotivation, feeling distant from self and others' (Thomson and Jaque, 2017, p.364). In the UK, for example, physical and emotional burn-out, is regularly reflected in pertinent research 'looking at health issues within the performing arts workforce consistently finds that 70-75% of our population report both mental and physical health problems, which is much higher than the national average' (BAPAM, 2020). Similarly to these alarming figures, an online survey on actors conducted in 2018 by the casting network Mandy, discovered that '59% of women and 61% of men suffer from stress, while 37% of women and 36% of men say they have had depression' (Mandy Network, 2018). Likewise, an Australian report on the entertainment industry, found a variety of issues pertinent to the actors industry: 'toxic, bruising work environment, extremely competitive [with] evidence of bullying…sexual assault, sexism and racism which is ignored or dealt with inadequately…sleep disturbances; levels of alcohol and drugs use much higher than the population norms…very high levels of anxiety and depression…suicide ideation, suicide planning and suicide attempts are extremely high' (Entertainment Assist, 2016, pp.171-3).

Theatre makers' accounts reflect similar concerns on the overall impact of their work and personal well-being: it is about 'acting and the theatre and how these mesh with our daily

lives' (Cynkutis, 2014, p.xiii), confirming the question of 'how to be an actor and remain a contented human being' (Cynkutis, 2014, p.210). Likewise and despite actor Ryszard Cieslak's being referred as the 'Zen master' of actors, his cool-down comprised of vodka, cigarettes and talking (Schechner, 1985, p.125). Stories of chronic alcoholism, depression and burn-out are well known for many actors, however, Cynkutis stipulates that acting work and alcohol are not compatible (Cynkutis, 2014, p.214), whilst Nakamura calls alcohol 'a real menace' (1990, p.92). Similarly Taviani points out:

> the history of actors contains the names of many people who have disappeared, who achieved surprising results and who did not know how to do it again or how to hold on to what they had done. Like fire in straw or will o' the wisps, actors can burn-out quickly (Wolford and Schechner, 1997, p.192).

Along these lines, Cynkutis (2014) questioned how an actor could balance family as well as artistic life and notes how following the dissolution of Grotowski's Polish Laboratory Theatre its actors did not manage to re-produce work of this calibre and some could produce no work. For example, actor Stanislaw Scierski committed suicide and others such as Ryszard Cieślak 'essentially drunk himself to death' (Cynkutis, 2014, p.xiv). Also, Kumiega confirmed the lack of cool-down process in Grotowski's group: 'I have no recollection of any specific conscious awareness of cool-down processes in the work of the Laboratory Theatre' (Panoutsos, 2017, p.20).

Similarly, Barker (1977) pointed out the absence of post-performance methodology and knowledge of techniques to cool-down:

> Littlewood…worked by breaking down the actor's preconceptions of himself and his work (that is what 'worked' for him) and then tried to put him in situations where he could find fresh, imaginative and authentic response to the stimuli provided by the situation and by the other actors. She systematically destroyed all security of past solutions to acting problems …it can be a frightening experience for an actor…I was shattered without knowing how to put myself together again (Barker, 1977, pp.2-3).

Barker's testimony on Littlewood's way of working reveals that actors without extensive experience or training to handle a wide spectrum of methodological approaches, may not only

become themselves artistically 'frightened' but also personally 'shattered'. This is because in professional environments, actors are required to adapt to the directors' eclectic view of working, which may not always provide a safety net for actors to 'put [themselves] together again'. Likewise, Schechner (1983) offers Grotowski's actors as an example of the absence of 'reintegration':

> ex-Grotowski-ites have been mostly unsuccessful in starting their own theatres or feeding what they've done with Grotowski into their own work. They are disabled rather than invigorated. Grotowski has not worked out, nor have his clients been able to supply, phase three of the rehearsal/ritual process: reintegration…thus participants are left hanging: they have been separated, stripped down, made into tabula rasa; they have had deep experiences, been written upon, made new; but they have not been enabled to reintegrate this new self into the social world (1983, pp.222-3).

The cool-down would not claim to prevent burn-out or change the nature of post-performance alcohol fuelled networking (Entertainment Assist, 2016); (Thomson and Jaque, 2017); (Seton, Maxwell and Szabó, 2019), however, it could provide a platform where actors make conscious transitions from artistic processes to social or personal contexts. Although the lack of systematic protocols that could accommodate these transitions may not in themselves be seen as primary in regards to the onset of mental health issues, this absence may exacerbate existing ones:

> there is no evidence that a secularised urban world has lessened the need for ritualised expression of an individual's transition from one status to another…ritual has become so completely individualistic that it is now found for many only in the privacy of the psychoanalyst's couch. It seems much more likely that one dimension of mental illness may arise because an increasing number of individuals are forced to accomplish their transitions alone and with private symbols (Gennep, 1960, p.xvii-iii).

Although Kimbali is not specifically referring to actors in this section of his introduction to Arnold Van Gennep's, *The Rites of Passage* [1908] (1960), his comments on the isolation of individuals when privately marking the crossing between thresholds are pertinent. This is because the actors' regular crossing of thresholds, including from rehearsal to performance, from one show to the next, from self to role, from artistic to the social and from the social to the private sphere, requires actors developing into transitions experts. A cool-down

conducted within the theatre space, integrated within the performance cycle (warm-up; performance; cool-down) could prevent the actors' unconscious accomplishment of 'these transitions alone' once they arrive home.

Initial findings

In this chapter, the nature of the actors' post-performance needs were particularly identified and distinguished from those of athletes' and dancers'. A variety of physical, mental and social concerns were discussed. Pertinent physical parameters include pre-performance eating habits, the role of the diaphragm and the onset of hot states and visceral drives; effects exacerbated by the adrenaline remaining in the body for up to an hour. Mental parameters include identity management, self-exposure, and the benefits of private self-review of performances. Social demands, such as the ones discussed in the stage door-debate, revealed that audiences' post-performance needs to re-engage with actors, clash with the actors' need to recuperate; the cool-down could assist in providing a platform for actors to prioritise and meet their needs in an orderly fashion. Also, research suggests no correlation between post-performance stresses and acting methodological approaches or rehearsal systems. This confirms the presence of the audience as the common denominator behind pre-performance, performance and post-performance stresses, indicating that transitions matter and that the cool-down could enable actors to systematically meet their needs during the post-performance phase.

Moreover, it is worth noting, that audiences' expectations are far from uniform, but largely dependent on the nature of performance and its cultural context, located within the spectrum of commercial or ritualistic, devised or codified. In other words, there is nothing natural or inevitable in the audiences' immediate engagement with actors following the theatre

performance and equally, in the actors' ignoring of their post-performance needs to immediately engage in such socialisation; both remain the product of practices embedded through training and cultural norms. This point is discussed and further developed in the following chapter, when juxtaposing Euro-American performing traditions with Eastern ones.

3. Eastern practices

Introduction

This chapter will acknowledge Eastern post-performance cool-down practices, because theorists and theatre makers have noted that some forms, such as *Noh, Kabuki, Ramlila* of Ramnagar and Chinese Theatre, incorporate the cool-down during their post-performance phase (Schechner, 1985, p.18); (Mandell, 2017); (Watanabe, 1991, p.195); (Bell, 1997, p.165). This incorporation invites juxtapositions with Euro-American approaches (Schechner, 1983, p.97); for example, could Eastern cool-down practices be utilised, to meet the Euro-American actors' post-performance needs? Meyer-Dinkgräfe (2013) seems to be attempting just that (see Chapter 1), in his proposed post-performance approach: 'listening to a recital of Rig Veda, or engaging in such recital' (2013, p.137), however, to his knowledge this approach has yet to be adopted by theatre groups (Meyer-Dinkgräfe, email communication) and remains 'a hypothesis' (2013, p.137). Although the absence of the cool-down within Euro-American forms raises our awareness of other performance traditions in search for alternative approaches, this is simply because those cool-down approaches exist and not because we have evidence on their efficacy or potential transferability for actors working in the Euro-American tradition. It is within this restriction that Eastern performance cool-down practices will be considered here.

This chapter will argue that Eastern and Euro-American performance processes in general and in regards to the cool-down in particular, remain distinct, despite occasional instances of deliberate (Flaszen, 2010) or inevitable cross-pollination (Schechner, 1983). This is because form is full of meaning, including cool-down form, which can neither be easily translated,

nor utilised out of context: 'formality…is not necessarily empty or trivial' (Bell, 1997, p.141), signifying distinct cultural association. In other words, the adoption of unfamiliar cool-down processes from Eastern performance traditions to Euro-American ones can become problematic without extensive exposure and intentional cross-pollination. Although form can easily be imitated, its meaning can as easily be lost on the actor conducting it. Subsequently, practitioners may decline to consistently engage with forms emerging within unfamiliar performing traditions, requiring extensive additional training, embodiment and clarification, as opposed to utilising more familiar processes, serving the same purpose.

There are many examples suggesting that the embodiment of unfamiliar forms is neither natural nor without effort. For example, in post-independence India, within the theatre of routes movement (Mee, 2008), Indian directors deliberately attempted to re-discover traditional performance techniques by removing themselves from 'mid-to-late nineteen century English plays' (Zarrilli, Daboo and Loukes, 2013, pp.83-6). Likewise, the teaching of Euro-American performing to Eastern students is not merely a matter of technicity but mainly of cultural context: 'method acting à la Stanislavsky says to internalise everything that is external; the typical Filipino acting…says to externalise all that is internal. The Western models of "no acting please" and of "underplaying" need to be studied and learned as a new skill by Ateneo student actors' (Abad and Maramara, 2016, p.28), whilst overcoming particular cultural traits, such as 'deference to authority' (2016, p.25), '*hiyâ*, or a sense of shame' and '*madamdamin*, or sense of emotionalism' (2016, p.27).

Cultural significance of artistic processes indicates that although external form and codification can become the object of playful experimentation or even imitation, in the long term the meaning supporting this form cannot resonate with practitioners or audiences out of context, as it would come across as impenetrable: 'human activity is situational, which is to

say that much of what is important cannot be grasped outside of the specific context in which it occurs' (Bell, 1992, p.81). The application of this insight to performance discourse suggests that different types of performance are not merely artistic in nature but also inherently cultural, representing particular ways of life and belief systems: 'theatre remains bound by its context precisely through the unique relationship images create between audience, performer and everyday life' (Read, 1993, pp.54-5). The understanding of cultural context is necessary and the successful translation important, when locating, naming, comparing and evaluating processes, such as the cool-down, originating within relatively unfamiliar performance practices.

Naming and the challenges of translation

Literary theorist Kenneth Burke points out that 'to tell what a thing is, you place it in terms of something else. This idea of locating, or placing, is implicit in our very word of definition itself: to define, or determine a thing, to mark its boundaries' (Burke, 1945, p.24). Moreover, this 'locating' incorporates additional complexity when it takes place within cross-cultural contexts, because it depends on the understanding and successful translation of cultural context; in this thesis the translation is related to the particularity of the translator.

My background as an actor is firmly located within the Euro-American performing tradition, whilst my exposure to Eastern processes excludes performance and remains occasional, idiosyncratic and limited to Yoga, Tai Chi, Qigong and Shotokan Karate. As a result, I heavily rely on those practitioners and theorists that have studied and/or practiced Eastern performing practices systematically and extensively, such as Schechner (1983; 1985; 2002), Barba and Savarese (1991), Grotowski (1968), Oida (1992) and Zarrilli, Daboo and Loukes (2013) amongst others. However, even the recruitment of such expert accounts does not ensure a straightforward path to effective definition and translation:

> Laplanders…used a single word to encompass both "people" and "reindeer". The life of the Laplander revolves around activities having to do

> with reindeer. Is a reindeer a human or is a human a reindeer? The question is senseless; the people and reindeer are identified, they go together, and the very fact of their identification in terminology gives the anthropologist one of his best clues to the Laplanders' ordering of the world and its objects (Strauss, [1959] 2008, p.22).

Strauss (2008) here points out that naming may seem surprising or even counterintuitive, without an understanding of its cultural context. In this case, the extreme conditions of life in the Artic provide the context that explains why life without reindeer is inconceivable to Laplanders and why only one word may be used for both 'reindeer' and 'Laplander'. Similarly, Schechner (2002) points out 'many cultures do not have a word for, or a category called art and therefore for them, 'separating "art" from "ritual" is particularly difficult' (2002, p.26). In contrast, in the Euro-American tradition, although it is possible to name re-occurring daily secular habits as ritual (Currey, 2013), the difference between ritual and art is rarely disputed, despite the occasional ambiguity:

> although European and American societies are apt to describe table etiquette, sports, theatre productions, and political rallies as ritual-like, there is still a general consensus that they are not the best examples of what we normally mean by ritual…we are not apt to consider them the same thing as a church wedding ceremony (Bell, 1997, p.164).

Similarly to Euro-American performance distinctions between ritual and art (Schechner, 2002) or typical and atypical examples of ritual within 'European and American societies' made here by Bell (1997), another distinction is required, between the cool-down found in Eastern performance practices and its potential within Euro-American performing contexts. Despite the performativity of ritual, one must constantly be reminded of its close relationship between action and thoughts/beliefs (Bell, 1992, pp.19-21), in other words: its meaning and cultural context. Namely, ritual cannot strictly be termed theatre, as the term is understood in the Euro-American performing tradition (Flaszen, 2010, p.65).

Likewise, cultural relevance can be also located within Euro-American traditions and should also be carefully considered. For example, the preference and popularity of method acting within the USA reveals something of the American cultural context and social character: 'this

conception of the psyche – an inner essence stifled by the outer, its impulses repressed by social conditioning – has little in common with Stanislavski's, but is one that has long held a privileged place in American Culture' (Councell, 1996, p.62). Similarly, the acting traditions British actors employ today, may often be seen as distinct in relation to European or American approaches: 'it is important to acknowledge the literary and stylistic conventions from which British theatre has evolved. The uses of poetry, rhetoric and epigrammatic dialogue as well as stock characters, disguise, elaboration, spectacle and social ritual have provided the background against which British performance convention has emerged' (Shirley, 2010, p.206).

Notwithstanding the opacity of these terms and my own limitations as a theatre practitioner in the direct experience of Eastern performance traditions, naming and classifying remains important: Strauss (2008) argues that 'to name is to know, and the extent of the knowing is dependent on the extent of the naming' (2008, p.20). Similarly, Bell (1997) points out that 'what a culture distinguishes and with what degree of clarity, can reveal interesting aspects of the ways in which people in that culture are likely to experience and interpret the world' (Bell, 1997, p.164). It is within the acknowledgment of such complexity, but at the same time necessity for definition, that this discourse will take place in this chapter.

Cross-pollination (East influences West)

This section focuses on practices deriving from Eastern performing traditions, utilised, modified or experimented with by Euro-American practitioners. This occasional meeting can be found in the work of practitioners looking for alternative processes, which may not exist in their own performance systems (Zarrilli, Daboo and Loukes, 2013, pp.1-5). Those theatre

makers' awareness of other performing traditions and their own curiosity are enough for cross-pollination processes to commence:

> Barba brought Kathakali exercises to Grotowski in Poland….When Barba founded his Odin Teatret he used these exercises-as modified by the Polish Lab as the basis of his own work. Grotowski has visited India on several occasions, the first in 1956-57 when he also travelled to China and Japan. Peter Brook's three month trip in 1972-73 with a troupe of 30 persons through Algeria, Mali, Niger, Dahomey and Nigeria is another version of the "trading partner" idea (Schechner, 1983, p.147).

Likewise, Paternò (2021) notes how Meyerhold studied several codified styles prior to creating his system of Biomechanics: '[Meyerhold's] research work…began with the practical study of the different traditional performances, from Kabuki Theatre to Traditional Chinese Theatre, from the Comedy of Art to Classic Ballet, from the Circus…to The Baroque Spanish theatre' (Paternò, 2021). Thorpe (2014) also notes such influences: 'directors Jerzy Grotowski, Peter Brook, Eugenio Barba, Jacques Lecoq, and Jacques Copeau have all cited Noh as an influence on their practice' (2014, p.322), Brecht was influenced by Chinese Theatre, despite his 'superficial knowledge' of it (Labędzka, 2008, p.68) and Stanislavski incorporated Yoga principles into the training of his actors (Grotowski, 1968, pp.116-7); (Carnicke, 2009, p.3). Such influences are particularly apparent in the attitude and intensity towards training: 'Oriental theatre has contributed both its dynamics, and more directly, the acrobatic exercises from Chinese and Indian theatre. The influence of these elements is obvious in Grotowski's and Barba's theatre' (Barba and Savarese, 1991, p.252). Similarly, Labędzka (2008) confirms this influence in the work of Grotowski, which incorporated aspects of its training methodology for his actors: 'different forms of the Far Eastern classical theatre, such as Beijing opera, Japanese nō theatre and Indian Kathakali' (2008, pp.53-4).

Cross-pollination, however, does not stop at training but is evident in performance approaches and subject matter. An example of this is the staging of *Sakuntalā* by Kālidāsa, a 5th century Indian classic by Grotowski's Theatre of the 13 Rows, which opened on 13

December 1960. Ludwik Flaszen (2010), Grotowski's close collaborator explains how this production was typical of Grotowski's attempts to realise ritual on stage:

> Oriental theatre is a theatre of ritual, where performances are ceremonies which communicate with the spectator by means of familiar signs; a division between the stage and the audience hardly exists. Ritual theatre is the antithesis of the theatre of illusion, where the actors reproduce an 'image of life', which the spectator looks at from one side. The principle of ritual is realised in all of Jerzy Grotowski's productions, not just in Shakuntalā (2010, p.65).

Similarly, for Konijn (2000), this influence in Grotowski's work manifests itself in the style of self-expression, also found in the work of Brook, Schechner and Barba (2000, p.41), which resembles 'trance acting…occurring in a variety of cultures and contexts ranging from Siberian and Korean shamans to Afro-Brazilian candomble' (Schechner, 2002, p.164). An example of this technique, is Grotowski's production of *The Constant Prince*, which opened 19 March 1968 (Flaszen, 2010, pp.110-1), as identified by theatre critic Joseph Kelera:

> until now I accepted with reserve the terms such as "secular holiness", "act of humility", "purification" which Grotowski uses. Today I admit that they can be applied perfectly to the character of the Constant Prince. A sort of psychic illumination emanates from the actor. I cannot find any other definition…everything that is technique is as though illuminated from within, light, literally imponderable. At any moment the actor will levitate...He is in a state of grace (Grotowski, 1968, no pagination).

What Kelera describes is not a direct copying of trance acting but the result of Grotowski's synthesis of a variety of techniques and unique way of working. This includes adopting aspects of Eastern training and performance, enriching his training in the Euro-American performance tradition, whilst gradually developing his own methodology (Grotowski, 1968, pp.16-7). Similar examples are also noted by Schechner (1983), such as Richard Foreman's use of *Ramlila* techniques for his productions (1983, p.218).

Cross-pollination (West influences East)

The influence between performing traditions however, is not a one-way street. For example, contemporary *Khatakali* teaching is also informed by Euro-American practices, as a result of

extensive contact with European methods (Schechner, 1983, p.218), noted again here by Schechner (1985):

> [Kathakali Kalamandalam] has many qualities associated with Western-style education: dormitories, classrooms, class periods, teachers who are assigned to specific classes…the whole feeling of Kalamandalam is ambivalent: between traditional Indian and modern Western methods…and teachers from the Kalamandalam and elsewhere, have gone to Delhi and beyond, where Khatakali training and mise-en-scène have been used by innovators within and outside India (1985, pp.226-7).

Likewise, Tadashi Suzuki is known to have incorporated aspects of both performing traditions for his production of the *Trojan Women* (Schechner, 1983, p.218), whilst Labędzka (2008) indicates the example of the Stanislavski's System, as widely used to produce plays in the realistic style, as early as the 1940s and 1950s in China (2008, p.34). Similarly, *Butoh* can be said to be thoroughly modern and at the same time retain a distinct Japanese character, due to its particular cultural origins (Zarrilli, Daboo, and Loukes, 2013, p.129). For example, Sanders (1988) indicates that *Butoh* was established not merely as a way to illustrate cultural grievances aimed at Japanese society, but also as an attempt to formulate a modern dance free from Western influences (1988, p.148). However, it is important to point out that *Butoh* pioneer Hijikata Tatsumi's first artistic influences were 'German expressionist Neue Tanz at the Masamura Katsuko Dance School…led by the innovative work of Rudolf Laban and Mary Wigman' (Zarrilli, Daboo, and Loukes 2013, p.129), representing another example of indirect European influence into Eastern practices. Likewise, *Noh* theatre practices are known to have been purposefully fixed in strict codification, representing the uniqueness of Japanese culture, in response to Western forms, such as Opera and Ballet (Halebsky, 2013, p.63).

Polycultural theatre

Another way to view cross-pollination is what Zarrilli, Sasitharan and Kapu (2016) call 'polycultural theatre'. These are cultural platforms where several performing transitions may

co-exist, suggesting that the cross-pollination 'feedback loop is very complicated. The work of a Japanese *butoh* dancer may affect a German choreographer whose dances in turn are elaborated on by a Mexican performance artist…and so on without national or cultural limits' (Schechner, 2002, p.31). To name but a few:

> as three examples of many, in 1994 Veenapani Chawla moved to Pondicherry in south India to found Adishakti in order to pursue a 'hybrid' theatre between traditional and contemporary practices (Gokhale 2014); in Chicago (USA), new modes of 'polycultural' theatre are being created in the work of theatres such as Silk Road Rising; and in Berlin one of the major 'state' theatres, The Maxim Gorki, recently began to programme its entire repertory season around what is called 'post-migrant theatre' – a decision which has meant the employment of a multi-ethnic group of professional German actors (Zarrilli, Sasitharan and Kapu, 2016, pp.335-6).

These examples reveal 'polycultural theatre' as a powerful force, neither strictly linear nor merely palindromic, influencing theatre makers over the past 200 years (Schechner, 1983, p.8). One such example is examined in the following section, the production of *The Stevenson Noh Project: The Gull* directed by Heidi Specht in 2006 following 'a three-year development process' (Halebsky, 2013, p.57), where both performing traditions would exist simultaneously, without distinctions between a 'source culture' and a target culture (Thorpe, 2014, p.322).

A Canadian *Noh* Play

Here, performance theorist Judith Halebsky (2013) describes the collaboration between Canadian and Japanese *Noh* actors in 2006, in an effort to 'translate Japanese Noh for Canadian audiences' (2013, p.56). In practice however, the tension between 'acculturation and foreignization' did not allow all actors to become equally involved in the devising of this work:

> acculturation translation strives to adjust a source text so that it fits seamlessly into the target language and culture. In contrast, foreignization translation strives to maintain as many aspects of the source text as possible, such as speech, form, and cultural references, even though these aspects may read as foreign to the target audience (Halebsky, 2013, p.57).

Halebsky (2013) adds that this tension between 'acculturation and foreignization' can potentially be resolved by 'constellation translation', which 'seeks to diminish the romantic

possibility of a work that can be both translated and unchanged' (2013, p.61). This pragmatic approach is then dependant on the intentions and expectations of the collaborators, 'the various artists involved in the production, such as actors, musicians, set designers, and costume designers', which Halebsky collectively calls 'translators' (2013, p.61). In this particular case, the understanding of inevitable change in both the 'source' and 'target' culture did not materialise:

> the structure of the production positioned the traditional form of Noh and its established kata as correct performance technique. This value structure diminished the possible degree of collaboration because participants were not able to contribute their points of view and prior knowledge to the process. The collaboration…was not equally weighted among Japanese and Canadians in a shared learning process. The Canadian actors were paid not only for the rehearsal of the production but also for the Noh training workshops. They were to learn from their Japanese counterparts, but this did not go both ways. The Japanese Noh artists were to perform in a manner that was traditional and correct to of Noh rather than learning from the skills of the Canadian actors. Because the production aimed specifically to be as close to the traditional form of Noh as possible, it did not require the Japanese Noh professionals to learn new performance techniques. This structured the production process so that the professional Noh artists were positioned as authorities and the professional Canadian artists were positioned as students (Halebsky, 2013, pp.64-5).

What lessons can one learn from A Canadian *Noh* Play, considering the potential of systematic cross-pollination in the cool-down between Eastern and Euro-American practice? It would appear that the cultural gap between the performers and their respective acting techniques proved too wide to bridge, despite three years of preparatory work by the theatre makers prior to the commencement of rehearsals. In the words of one of the participants (Fujino): 'since "The Gull" was an intercultural collaboration — a two-way effort between Japanese Noh masters and professional western theatre artists — the contribution of the Canadian cast cannot be minimized. Frequently, and understandably, we were placed in the position of students of Noh' (Halebsky, 2013, p.65).

Similarly and in the prospect of Eastern cool-down practices adopted by Euro-American performers, would those actors also perceive this cool-down practice as a value statement of

one performing culture informing another, from a top-down position? Or would such adopted cool-down practices be rejected outright because of the unfamiliarity of form, without consideration for any post-performance benefits? For example, when I asked Actor 9 (see Chapter 4) to comment on Eastern cool-down practices, the response suggested unfamiliarity and tension: '[I am] not aware of them and have to say I don't much like the sound of them. What are they? I'd rather dread to think. If they are calming meditation type stuff I could never in a hundred years do that kind of thing after a show' (Actor 9, email communication). Actor 9's response indicates that cultural unfamiliarity can present a barrier to practice, irrespective of potential benefits of the cool-down process itself. In the next section, I will discuss examples of such processes reflected in secondary sources.

Eastern cool-down examples

Euro-American actors following a theatre performance often go out for a meal or meet at the pub for a drink with fellow colleagues, relatives, friends or other professionals, without a marked cool-down. In contrast, *Kabuki* actors completing their evening performance around 21:00 or 21:30 go for dance lessons and return home around 23:00 or 23:30: 'then the actor has to get up around eight the next morning, eat, go to his lessons and then go to the theatre' (Nakamura, 1990, p.88). This account reveals the demands of *Kabuki* actors in relation to dance lessons taking place prior to or following a theatre performance, due to the necessity for actors to prepare for the next production, with only 'five days to learn all the lines and movements' (Nakamura, 1990, p.88). It is unclear to what degree those evening post-performance dance lessons may be seen as a conscious marking between the demands of performance and everyday rhythms or even a cool-down from performance stresses. Either way, these lessons provide a very specific framework, which exclude immediate post-performance socialisation (Nakamura, 1990, p.88). Here, the warm-up, performance and

cool-down are not merely parts of a performance cycle but appear integrated into a cycle of living, with sleeping, eating, performing and continual training representing interlinked parts. This is then a complete way of life for ten months of the year (Nakamura, 1990, p.90), where *Kabuki* actors are immersed in continuous training, rehearsing and sharpening of their skills side-by-side their daily performances, whilst preventing perpetual performing and excessive socialising during the post-performance phase.

Schechner (1985) offers further proof of the differences between Eastern and Euro-American post-performance protocols, in the open-air folk performances of traditional Hindu texts:

> after Ramlila of Ramnagar, the boys who play Rama, Sita and Rama's brothers are carried back to where they live for the months of the performance. Except for when they are performing their feet are never permitted to touch the ground while they wear their full regalia (1985, p.18).

This examination of *Ramlila* indicates the importance given to the conclusion of the performance in relation to the performers. This tradition's prohibition of the performers' feet from touching the ground whilst still in their costumes, indicates that the immediate post-performance phase is carefully managed; not up to the performers to negotiate but fixed by tradition, which in turn is closely related to religious ritual.

Similarly, Moriake Watanabe (1991) notes how the end of a *Noh* performance is signified, incorporating the neutral actor concept, almost like a cool-down on stage, with the audience still present:

> when a Noh actor leaves the stage because to all extents and purposes the performance is over, he has a singular habit: he moves very slowly, as if his exit was an integral part of the performance. He is no longer in character, because the character's action is finished, but neither is he in his daily reality. He is in an intermediate state. In a certain way he is performing his own absence. But this absence is performance and is therefore a present absence. Expressed in these terms this technique would seem to be a paradox, but when practiced it is very clear. The same thing occurs in Kabuki: the actor must not fade away, he must show himself in a fictive state (Watanabe, 1991, p.195).

This fading away whilst still on stage resembles the beginning of the cool-down phase: in both Kabuki and Noh, the actor leaves the stage very slowly, as if gradually preparing himself and the audience for their respective reintegration into the everyday social dynamics and concerns. Barba also points out the meaning of the Japanese word *otsukaresama*, which audiences use to thank actors following a theatre performance: 'you are tired' - in this way audiences are aware and positively value the actors' exertion: 'they have not saved their energy and for this they are thanked' (Barba and Savarese, 1991, p.9).

In Chinese Theatre we also find ritual-like processes, following the main performance phase. More particularly, Bell (1997) refers to 'Peking Opera [which is] more like the Italian *Commedia dell' Arte*' (1997, p.165), pointing out that during temple festivals, in celebration of a temple deity and only when the audience has left the temple, a private ritual takes place: 'from about two or three in the morning until dawn, the actors perform just for god' (1997, p.165). Is this a purely religious ceremony or a cool-down of sorts following the public performance? Bell does not elaborate on this particular point. However, it is clear that in Chinese Theatre there are several instances of ritual performance, where the audience is prohibited from attending for their own protection, as in the case of the ritual exorcism of a particular space by actors, to cleanse the space from 'demonic forces' (Bell, 1997, p.165).

Another example is noted by professor and artistic director Erin B. Mee, whose visit to Kerala, India in 1991, exposed her to the performative ritual *Theyyattam* and the understanding of the warm-up and the cool-down as incorporated into the spectacle and 'given equal weight' (Mandell, 2017, p.39). This encounter prompted Mee to consider equivalent cool-down processes utilised within Euro-American practices, some inspired by Yoga, as discussed in Chapter 1.

Similarly, performers in the Balinese tradition *Sanghyang Dedari* include a ritualised immersion into traditional songs and rhythms for hours at a time and for weeks on end, a training of sorts, which is only complete when the girls chosen from the local community to perform are able to reach the state of 'trance' (Covarrubias, [1937] 2006). Training consists of nightly songs performed in the temple by both men and women, until the girls 'become more and more subject to the ecstasy produced by the intoxicating songs [and] by the incense' (Covarrubias, 2006, p.335). Elsewhere Covarrubias describes this process further:

> the sanghyang dedari…a magic dance in which the little girls dressed in legong costumes go into trance, supposedly to be possessed by the spirits of the heavily nymphs, to bring luck and magic protection to the village thorough their performance. The steps of the shanghyang are exactly the same as those of the legong and it is disconcerting and eerie that at no time have the little girls received dance training, and that when in trance they are able to perform the difficult steps that would take months and even years of practice for an ordinary legong (2006, pp.229-30).

In this example of a trance performance, its ritualistic nature is emphasised: performers are 'taken over' by Gods, animals, spirits or objects and the performers become unconscious and besides themselves to a degree: 'upon recovering from the trance, [Balinese sanghyang] dancers are often unaware that others were dancing; sometimes they don't remember their own dancing' (Schechner, 1985, p.41). Following such immersion and intensity, the young performers are not immediately re-united with their families, but undertake an extensive cool-down that includes more songs and sprinkling 'with holy water' (Covarrubias, 2006, p.338).

Notwithstanding Eastern cool-down processes as those reflected into secondary sources, I also attempted to engage with contemporary Eastern practitioners, in order to gain their insight in regards to the post-performance phase, however the challenges of distance restricted the availability of such responses. Attempts were made to receive cool-down accounts via email communication from Kerala-based *Kathakali* actors, but no responses could be obtained. A single response was received via email communication on 12 October 2019 by Japanese Beijing Opera performer Yuta Ishiyama, relating to cool-down practices:

> the Beijing opera actor does not perform a lot cool-down after the curtain, too and, as well as a European and American theatre, returns to a pub and the bar and comes back to the house. I do not drink liquor at all. When appearance continues day after day, I may receive massage after the curtain…the reason not to perform cool-down is chased for face-wash, change of clothes and clearing…I cannot perform cool-down enough on the spot. Because the other wants to be released from extreme strain as soon as possible, they may go out to drink liquor even immediately without doing cool-down. A drinker has many Beijing opera actors too (Ishiyama, email communication).

Ishiyama makes two points here. First, although he does not consume alcohol, most contemporary actors utilise it in the same way Euro-American actors do: 'to be released from extreme strain as soon as possible'. Second, he makes a distinction between alcohol consumption and the cool-down. This insight corresponds to Nakamura's comments (1990) when he calls alcohol consumption by Kabuki actors 'a real menace' (1990, p.92) adding: 'the many actors who do drink find that a hot bath in the morning helps to alleviate the effects of alcohol' (1990, p.92). In a different part of the email Ishiyama explains his insights: 'the world of the drama is not often systematized in comparison with sports [and it is conducted] according to the discretion of the actor individual' (Ishiyama, email communication); a point already discussed in the introduction of Chapter 2.

Although a single account on contemporary Eastern post-performance habits represents limited scope for the purposes of this discourse, it provides an indication that professional actors in commercial theatres everywhere, regardless of performing tradition, may refrain from conducting a cool-down, despite their post-performance exertion. However, without more data from contemporary performers it is unclear how to further analyse Ishiyama's response. It is possible that the conducting of the cool-down depends on each particular performance's position within the spectrum of ritual-like and commercial. It is also possible that the conducting of the cool-down depends on its default incorporation, if any, as seen in *Kabuki, Ramlila* of Ramnagar, *Noh*, Chinese Theatre (within Temple contexts), T*heyyattam, Sanghyang Dedari*.

Examples of other phases within Eastern performance

Such differences in form and context between Eastern and Euro-American performing traditions are not restricted to the post-performance phase but are evident in other performance phases, such as the warm-up:

> the Nō actor contemplates his mask; Jatra performers in Bengal worship the gods of the performance who manifest themselves in the props assembled on the trunks set up backstage…sometimes these preparatory 'moments' are hours long…performers of Yakshagana, Kathakali and Ramlila in India spend up to 4 hours putting on make-up and costumes (Schechner, 1983, pp.221-2).

Discussing such formal and often codified pre-performance processes, it is no surprise that the cool-down is similarly ordered and marked. Rehearsal processes can also be seen as very different between the two traditions. For example, in the Euro-American tradition an actor may become the character through the rehearsal process of a play or the devising of a new performance score; in the *Noh* and *Kathakali* actors become the character through a 'lifelong process of training', in what is essentially the learning of a codified acting language (Zarrilli, 1990, p.131).

Eastern performance training also retains its formal character: 'the training process in such Asian disciplines is not simply like ritual process, it is a ritual process' (Zarrilli, 1990, p.133), with group *Kathakali* training that starts 'at 4:25 A.M' (Schechner, 1985, pp.216-7) prior to one-to-one learning, in which the teacher shows and the student imitates: 'in Kathakali, a character's body exists through the teacher who embodies each character. The learner learns each character through the body-transformation of/by the teacher' (Raina, 2017, p.68), with no 'demand to "know" before one can "do"' (Schechner, 1985, p.216). Similarly with athletes and dancers, performers within Eastern performance practices, learn thorough warm-up and cool-down routines from a young age; those practices compliment the learning of roles fixed by tradition, within a highly stylised and codified performance context (Zarrilli, 1990, pp.131-2):

> the learning method is imitation, composed of two phases: observation and repetition…the objective of a training session is not to develop an original approach to the art, but to imitate the given model as closely as possible. Roles are clearly defined; the teacher is the 'giver', the unquestionable embodiment of tradition, while the student is the 'taker', an empty vessel ready to be filled (Pellecchia, 2012, p.39).

Other examples of such formality extend to areas of professionalization within Eastern performing arts. For example, *Kabuki* actors failing to arrive at least thirty minutes prior to the beginning of performance to warm-up, are not allowed to perform on stage. Instead, a stand-in actor takes their place, whilst the responsibility for the stand-in's fee remains firmly with the late actor (Nakamura, 1990, p.89).

These examples indicate that form, functionality and cultural relevance are inseparable within Eastern performing contexts, whilst the Eastern cool-down, warm-up and training differ widely from Euro-American processes. Although such differences can be easily located in form, they also reflect deeper cultural connections, suggesting that their utilisation by Euro-American performers could prove to be little more than imitations, when conducted out of context:

> a current and prolific Russian translator of Russian theatre books announced that nowhere in the entire United States is the Stanislavski System truly practiced. He is of course absolutely right. We are Americans. We are not nineteenth-century Russians. We create from ourselves and from our world. Where the Stanislavski System has been taken over literally from his books, it has failed, as all imitations always do (Gray et al., 1964, p.140).

Meisner's mention of 'imitation' as the route to failure is indicative of the need to devise a Euro-American cool-down approach anew, as in the example of Bloch's (1993) 'step-out'. Also, Meisner's 'we are Americans' highlights the cultural difference between Russian and American practitioners, despite both traditions firmly located within the Euro-American performing umbrella; how much bigger is the cultural gap between Eastern and Euro-American practices? In other words, the dangers of imitation highlighted by Meisner should prevent attempts to faithfully and mechanically replicate any system or form, such as the Stanislavski System, as well as other training systems, including Eastern practices, because of

their unique cultural and historical origins. The same applies for the theatre work of Grotowski (1959-1973) or significant performance events within the history of the Avant Guard (Schechner, 2010, p.910). Meisner's 'we create from ourselves and from our world' highlights the important of context.

The importance of context

The Eastern cool-down phase examined in this chapter, as well as practices located in other areas of the performance sequence within the Eastern performance tradition, including *Kabuki, Ramlila* of Ramnagar, *Noh*, Chinese Theatre, *Theyyattam* and *Sanghyang Dedari*, indicate formality and a proximity to ritual, what Bell (1997) calls 'ritual density', apparent in societies incorporating more ritual than others (1997, p.173). In contrast, Euro-American performing traditions are the product of secularisation 'correlated with the displacement of ritual, the dominance of moral-ethical values over intersection with divine powers, the emergence of lay authority over clerical authority, and the privatisation of spirituality' (Bell, 1997, p.198); this makes their direct comparison with Eastern performance practices problematic. For example, in ritual the audience or congregation believes and participates, whereas in theatre it watches and appreciates. In a ritual such as the Mass, the ordered celebrant 'brings Other here', whereas in theatre the 'audience in the Other' (Schechner, 1983, p.137). Although both ritual and theatre are performative, it is 'context, not fundamental structure [that] distinguishes ritual, entertainment and ordinary life from each other' (Schechner, 1983, p.150). Looking at the Eastern cool-down processes' distinct character, as well as the fundamental differences between the two performance traditions in phases such as training, performance and rehearsal, a question emerges: are we comparing like for like? In other words, Eastern post-performance cool-down practices and needs are not entirely comparable with Euro-American ones.

Are we comparing like for like?

Looking at the cool-down examples of *Sanghyang Dedari, Noh, Kathakali, Kabuki* and Chinese Theatre, amongst others - as there are hundreds of codified performances (Schechner, 2002, p.156) - their interlinked relationship with ritual and religion becomes clear (Oida, 1992, p.203). Balinese *Dedari* dancers learn trance techniques in intensive training periods and their performance alludes to communication with the sacred (Covarrubias, 2006), whilst Chinese theatre post-performance ritual processes noted by Bell (1997) indicate a performance within a temple dedicated to the gods (1997, p.165). Pronounced religious character is also evident in *Ramlila* of Ramnagar, where the boys performing the roles of gods are prohibited from touching the ground for the duration of the performances (Schechner, 1985, p.18) and 'live in seclusion…during the thirty-one days of the cycle play' (Schechner, 1983, p.95).

This close link between the artistic and religious contexts in Eastern performance is also identified by *Kabuki* actor Matazo Nakamura (1990): 'Japanese performing arts and religion have a long history; at the beginning of the eight century, the word now used to refer to Kabuki actors, *yakusha*, meant "one who serves the gods"' (1990, p.157). Oida (1992) links the natural rhythm of life with the musical rhythm of agrarian societies in China, India and the rest of Asia with Zeami's reference on the three-part performance sequence *jo-ha-kyū* (Zeami, 1984, pp.83-7). *Noh* theatre draws heavily from Taoism, Zen, Confucius, all reflecting cultural context, gradually developed over a period twenty six hundred years, encapsulated within Zeami's plays and his notes on acting (Zarrilli, Daboo, and Loukes, 2013, p.100). Evident ritual density is also understood by Turner, when describing Eastern theatre as 'rooted in religious and ethical worldviews unfamiliar to cultural and philosophical traditions deriving from the Athens-Rome-Jerusalem triangle, which encompasses Euro-American outlooks' (Schechner, 1985, p.xii).

In contrast, Euro-American performance practices are characterised by a constant state of flux, where 'acting is always changing, usually in relatively superficial matters of style – voice patterns, stances, degrees of literalness' (Goldman, 1975, p.102):

> for many contemporary audiences, early examples of acclaimed screen performances by renowned Method actors such as Marlon Brando, Montgomery Clift and James Dean now appear somewhat mannered and conventionalised…what might previously have been regarded as a 'truthful' performances by Edward Alleyn or David Garrick or Sarah Bernhardt would not necessarily be considered so today, highlights the conviction that truth values are constantly shifting in response to numerous cultural, artistic, social and political variables (Shirley, 2010, pp.207-12).

This constant shift in Euro-American acting approaches means that may have been aesthetically acceptable in the early 20th century, may not be in the 21st: 'values are not eternal. Expectations cannot always be fulfilled. Things change; so do we' (Strauss, 2008, p.27). In other words, what Shirley (2010) calls 'truth values' in Euro-American practices is in direct contrast with Eastern practices, whose objective is the preservation of values, as expressed by Japanese writer Junishirō Tanizaki [1933] (2001), which coupled with recent performance research (Kawai, et al., 2013), explains this resistance to innovation as both cultural and functional in Easter performance.

Tanizaki and Kawai et al.

In Eastern practices, the preservation of old forms is not merely linked with the perpetuation of culture and identity but is also reflected in practical, as well as aesthetic concerns. For example, Tanizaki in his *In Praise of Shadows* [1933] (2001) saw modernity as a threat to traditional Japanese art forms, one of many Japanese scholars and intellectuals of his time, who at least since the 1930s had been verbalising their desire to more generally overcome Western modernity (Buruma and Margakit, 2005, pp.1-3). More particularly, Tanizaki's (2001) concern is located on the lost appeal of *Kabuki* theatre, attributing this to the strong stage lighting conditions generated by electricity and 'modern floodlamps' (2001, p.40). He then proceeds to explain that this is not merely a cultural consideration in general terms, but

directly related to the Oriental tradition of shadow appreciation, a practical as well as aesthetic concern engrained in a particular tradition and a way of life (Tanizaki, 2001, p.63). Recent research vindicated Tanizaki's (2001) claims of association between form and context, confirmed by Kawai et al. (2013) on *Noh* lighting conditions:

> in the Noh drama, combinations of the vertical and horizontal movements and their moving speed are what an actor can control during the play. Subtle changes in the tilting angles create various facial expressions during the drama, in which shadow information should play a crucial role in conveying the character's emotions (2013, p.4).

In other words, although the *Noh* mask is fixed, actors are trained to manipulate it in order to indicate a spectrum of emotions. However, the development and utilisation of modern lighting set above and from the sides of the stage (rather than at the feet of the performer), although it increases the available light, it also reduces the areas of darkness on stage and on the mask. In other words, modern lighting arrangements, limit the performers' ability to effectively manipulate the mask and subtly indicate the transition from one emotion to the next. In contrast, the traditional lighting method would allow the *Noh* actor to use the angle of the mask to display an array of emotions, despite the mask itself being fixed: 'a Noh stage is characterized by its darkness, reflecting the lighting conditions of the ancient ages...small inclination of the actor's head and the body during the drama conveys multiple subtle emotional changes' (Kawai et al., 2013, p.2). This example can be seen to vindicate Tanizaki's (2001) concern on the lost art of shadow appreciation, indicative of the interwoven relationship between cultural contexts and practical performance concerns.

Initial findings

Notwithstanding practical explanations on the interwoven relationship between form and context within performance contexts, cultural relevance remains important because it illuminates concepts of collective identity. In the case of Eastern performance practices, when

contemporary concerns do not seem to penetrate codified performance, this is because the preservation of artistic form is meant to be a reminder of identity and cultural values. This cultural-specific approach and the emphasis on form, do not only provide a particular way of working, but also cultural and national definition. Viewed in this way, it is no surprise that Eastern performance incorporates codified warm-up processes that are fixed, as well as fixed cool-down protocols. Similarly, codified performances are a direct product of codified training and rehearsal methods, while Euro-American processes are not. This indicates that acting systems develop within, as well as reflect, particular cultural milieus and that the adoption of unfamiliar performance processes is rarely without challenges.

The discourse in this chapter suggests that in order to avoid the dangers of imitation, cultural appropriation and unfamiliarity of form, it would be more suitable to develop cool-down approaches within the Euro-American tradition, rather than attempt the borrowing or adapting from Eastern performance forms. This is because Euro-American post-performance cool-down processes would have to appreciate the actors' overall artistic process and existing working conditions, as well as the dynamics between actors and audiences during the post-performance phase, which at present neglect any marking between the performance and the cool-down phase, instead normalising and accommodating perpetual performance. These working conditions are identified more particularly in the following chapter, where contemporary actors engage in semi-structured interviews, sharing their experience of the performance cycle.

4. Interview-only method; the actor's practice and point of view

Introduction

Notwithstanding the emerging interest in the actors' post-performance phase by theorists and educators, how do contemporary actors acknowledge and manage their exertion within professional contexts? In other words, if the mind is the union of the brain and the body (Gelernter, 2016), what is the actors' state of mind following a theatre performance and, which particular cultural or artistic practices do they utilise to manage physical/emotional, mental and social exertion during this phase? In asking these questions – see Appendix - (on their warm-up; cool-down; familiarity with Eastern practices; their colleagues' practice; the awareness of their post-performance needs; and the management of their transitions), I approached directly and indirectly hundreds of actors from four European countries (Austria, Germany, Greece and the UK) and the USA. The similarity of training, rehearsal and working methods within the Euro-American performing tradition, allowed me to venture outside the UK, in search for a diversity of accounts, perspectives and insights.

Most of the interviews were conducted in London, UK and Athens, Greece and all actors that showed themselves available were engaged with. The actors' accounts indicate a wide variety of professional backgrounds; in the UK, ranging from fringe to the Royal Shakespeare Company, including work for Complicité, physical theatre companies and involvement in small scale touring. The Austrian, Greek, German and USA actors' background indicate work in repertory theatre, mainstream commercial productions, Austrian National Theatre (Burgtheater) and the Mannheim National Theatre (Nationaltheater Mannheim) in Germany.

The choice of countries is idiosyncratic and largely due to my engagement as a professional actor in Greece, the UK and the United States. Austria was chosen due to personal contacts, which introduced me to German speaking actors working in Austria and Germany. In the UK, actors were approached via Spotlight, the Actor's Centre and all London-based actor agencies, which were requested to inform their clients of this research and where possible show them available for interviews. In Austria, I approached an actor's theatre union (the IG Freie Theater, https://freietheater.at/), with a membership of approximately 3500 performers. Similarly, the Greek Actors Union (SEI, http://www.sei.gr/) counting thousands of members was approached both in person and via email.

A total of sixteen actors provided their accounts, 8 females and 8 males, from their early 20s to their late 80s; with four actors each having accumulated over 30 years of stage experience. In cases where face-to-face communication proved challenging, actors were given the alternative option to provide their responses via email or skype/zoom. Although interviews are harder to arrange and easy to postpone or cancel, compared to the completion of standard questionnaires used by researchers such as Konijn (2000) and Giles (2011), the resultant material gathered in this chapter provides a useful snapshot on the variety of attitudes and practices of contemporary actors: one actor from the USA, one actor from Germany, two actors from Austria, four actors from Greece, and eight actors from the UK. All participating actors' responses were anonymised and they are simply referred to as Actor 1, Actor 2, etc. This is because for many working actors anonymity is preferred, in order to preserve a certain degree of control over their projected professional image to others, whilst feeling free to verbalise their views and experiences for the purposes of this research without trepidation.

Only one of the 16 actors offered a systematic cool-down process, described below:

> for me this is all part of the after-show ritual of getting out of costume and taking off the stage makeup. I once again return to the breath and focus on those deep, long breaths that help me become grounded again. If the show is demanding physically I will take some time to stretch out so that I know I can get up tomorrow and do it all again. If the show is emotionally very taxing, I will take myself off to a quiet area as I get out of costume and focus on bringing myself back to a safe, level mental space. I do this using techniques that I learned through counselling and therapy rather than through acting teachers … When I was younger I found it very easy to ride the adrenaline after a performance and not take time to check in with myself. As I got older I realised how quickly this caused me to burn out and subsequently give lacklustre performances on following nights…for me, post-show is a time to reflect, assess and adapt for the following performance (Actor 8, email communication).

This account and cool-down practice represents the exception rather than the rule. It also provides a common thread between 'ride the adrenaline' with 'burn out' and the giving of 'lacklustre performances on following nights', suggesting the potential of the cool-down in the maintenance of artistic consistency throughout the performance run, as well as the management of psycho-physical stresses. This chapter will indicate that these post-performance needs are not only particular to Actor 8, but pertinent to all the actors interviewed, whilst the cool-down remains an unknown phase, in theory and practice.

The unknown cool-down

Secondary sources discussed in Chapter's 1 and 2 indicate that the cool-down phase as a whole is not considered by the vast majority of actors, having neither the training nor any concept of its potential; this was confirmed by Actor 3:

> first I even heard the concept of the cool-down was when I was doing a voice course and they mentioned it in a voice-technique context. Because people always do a vocal warm-up they don't do a vocal warm-down or cool-down. And it was kind of a revelation "oh, yeah right, that exists; it's a 'thing'". But I don't think I have ever heard any director mention it. I would kind of say that you hear it for dancers more or for workouts in the gym…even from drama school I remember we used to get out of the theatre as quickly as possible, just sort-your-shit-together-as-fast-as-possible, just to leave, especially if you have people waiting for you outside, so you don't want them to wait too long. Sometimes not even completely taking off your make-up (interview).

Actor 3 here makes two points. First, the actor indicates an unfamiliarity with the term cool-down, although recognises its relevance within a 'voice-technique context', 'dancers' or 'workouts in the gym', whilst suggesting that this absence begins at training environments, where habits formed during the actors' training period, influence their professional practice (Taylor, 2016, p.199); (Szlawieniec-Haw, 2020, p.119). The second point concerns post-performance socialisation pressures 'don't want them to wait too long', related to engagement in networking: generally considered 'a powerful technique for finding work' (Entertainment Assist, 2016, p.18), despite the considerable exertion accumulated by the pre and performance phase (Seton, Maxwell and Szabó, 2019). This second point confirms that actors do not entirely control the timing or nature of their immediate post-performance socialisation, whilst the audiences' needs are deemed as over and above the actors'.

This lack of awareness linked with the absence of pertinent post-performance training is reflected in most interviewed actors' responses: 'I don't really have a specific cool-down routine…I can't remember ever discussing cool-down techniques at drama school' (Actor 5, email communication). Similarly, Actor 10 (email communication) and Actor 7 (email communication) indicated that the cool-down was not discussed at drama school, whilst the latter's only practice is to 'remove my make-up, get changed and head to the pub' (Actor 7, email communication). In other words, actors bypass a marked post-performance process, in favour of perpetual performance (Panoutsos, 2017).

Similar informal practices are also confirmed by Actor 9: 'I go for a drink with either friends who have come or fellow cast members (even if I am not drinking alcohol) to [the] theatre bar, club or pub' (email communication). Likewise, Actor 6 indicated a lack of awareness on ordered transitions and linked the cool-down phase with post-performance socialisation and alcohol consumption: '[I] get changed as quickly as possible and get to the pub for a

drink…make sure everything is set up ready for the next day in terms of props and costume' (email communication). This experience is also shared by Actor 14 who points out that 'after shows I would be hungry and normally engage in socialisation. Alcohol is not something that you can easily refuse in that social context. Everyone drinks and relaxes in the pub and it is difficult to remain distant from this after-performance cool-down' (interview).

These accounts provide three initial points of reference. First, they confirm an absence of awareness in regards to the cool-down practice; second, that this absence begins at training environments, where the cool-down is not taught within post-performance contexts; and third, the post-performance phase is characterised by immediate socialisation and alcohol consumption; 'a means of unwinding' (Maxwell, Seton and Szabó, 2015, p.108) and perpetual performance (Panoutsos, 2017).

Pleasure in perpetual performance

Without a conscious transition, perpetual performance represents the default position for interviewed actors during the post-performance phase:

> I think most of the times it's a race to the bar. There will definitely be a very small percentage of actors who will take the time and care to possibly have a stretch, take their costume off, drink loads of water, do some deep breathing, sit down and actually take a lot of time to come out of the process they've just been through…it's like playing sport isn't it or having a sort of out of body experience, you know, and then afterwards your body, your brain needs to come back. You may be buzzing with energy or you might be exhausted or a mixture of the two but I would say 90-95% percent of actors that I have worked with, including myself would be 'Can I get to the bar? Will I make it to the pub for last orders?' (Actor 13, interview).

As the race 'to the bar' is currently the informal post-performance protocol, actors adhere to it by utilising their adrenaline driven energy attained on stage to fuel their immediate post-performance personal and professional interactions; especially as this 'buzzing' is highly pleasurable and addictive:

> it is like taking drugs and I am speaking as an ex-drug taker, I was a very regular drug taker. I would definitely compare performing to taking drugs. It gives you a very all-natural high, which is great, because it lasts a lot longer than any other drug is going to last, generally speaking. So, it is a natural

> high that will last for several hours after the performance (Actor 13, interview).

Actor 13's reference to the post-performance state as similar to drug taking, indicates the intensity of that 'high' emanating from performances as significant, pleasurable and even longer in duration than conventional drugs; also confirmed by Weil (2004): 'drugless highs are often perceived as better than drug highs' (2004, p.60). This level of activation is confirmed by researchers.

Collectively, following the conclusion of a theatrical performance, actors are exposed to hot-states (Konijn, 2000); (Nicholson, 2013), visceral drives (Loewenstein, 1996); (De Ridder, et al., 2014); (Williams et al., 2016), and hormonal changes (Konijn, 2000, pp.73-4); (Hormone Health Network, 2018); (Cafasso, 2018), as well as the demands of social performance (Goffman, 1959); (Mast, 1986), without respite and without a conscious transition. Despite the significance and intensity of the simultaneous effect of these parameters considered collectively during the post-performance phase, actors have neither the agency nor the awareness to identify their post-performance needs:

> the cool-down as a term for me is non-existent, perhaps mistakenly. I am not underestimating it; I just don't know what it means. I admire those actors that do [know what it means]. I am in a constant "state", in a constant state of tension…I like this tension, the phone ringing, to take bookings, to complain, to lose my mobile, I am a "role" (Actor 2, interview).

In this excerpt, Actor 2 concedes a lack of familiarity with the cool-down phase and argues in favour of perpetual performing, the blending of artistic and social performance (Panoutsos, 2017), reflecting a personal preference in this established way of working: 'I like this tension, the phone ringing, to take bookings, to complain, to lose my mobile, I am a "role"'.

Much like Actor 13's account, pleasure is a feature in Actor 2's constant state of tension, where the person, the theatre manager and the actor are blended into one entity during the post-performance phase. Moreover, because of the pleasurable nature of this blending of

social and artistic commitments, representing perhaps a sense of constant engagement and action, Actor 2 would refrain from conducting post-performance cool-down practices: 'what happens after [the performance] give me action and take away my soul. But if I get cross, I will take Lexotanil; I will go and argue with my friend; I get crazy' (interview). However, this statement represents an inherent contradiction: between the Actor 2's actual needs - implied by the usage of Lexotanil, an anti-anxiety drug (Virtual Medical Centre, 2018) - and a preference to ignore cool-down approaches. Although this constant state of tension may feel familiar and pleasurable, it is counterintuitive in regards to the Actor 2's long-term welfare; in this case, the post-performance management of stresses may not always be attained without prescription medication.

In other words, actors' accounts do not only indicate their significant needs and the absence of training, but also a resistance on their part to consider marked cool-down processes as beneficial, because of the pleasure inherent in perpetual performing or the 'endorphins of performing…you sort of don't want to come down from a show high to engage the drudgery of physical maintenance' (Mandell, 2017, p.42). Actor 2's conscious ignoring of the cool-down and its potential is something Actor 13 pointed out as something this research was bound to regularly encounter:

> I can imagine the cool-down would meet resistance because people would say: 'I don't need a cool-down. The reason I do it is because I want a party, I want a buzz, I don't want to go in and do some deep breathing and take all the edge off my adrenaline, I want the opposite, that's why I do it.' So, that's one of the difficult things you will encounter, I am sure (interview).

Actor 13's remark is in correspondence with Mandell's pleasure of a 'show high' (2017), confirming Actor 2's account, reiterating actors' informal practice of perpetual performance, what Seton, Maxwell and Szabó describe as a post-performance 'self-reward' (2019, p.140), which over time becomes the default practice. This may explain why actors fail to develop cool-down processes on their own, long after their main training has completed and following

extensive experience of post-performance exertion, which may also lead to burn-out (Barker, 1977, pp.2-3); (Wolford and Schechner, 1997, p.192); (Entertainment Assist, 2016, p.13); (Robb, 2017, p.54); (Thomson and Jaque, 2017, pp.364-7); (Wigmore, 2018, p.25). In the following section I will consider the actors' accounts in relation to their post-performance needs, thematically in three groups: physical/emotional; mental and social.

First post-performance concern: the physical and emotional cool-down

Physical

Interlinked physical and emotional exertion may not manifest itself in an entirely predictable way, but depending on the particularity of each performance, one aspect may be more predominant than the other:

> there must also be time to make sure you are able to come back tomorrow and do it all again without causing any damage to yourself. If I feel that there is something that will prohibit that, I will address it. For example, for one show I had to kneel for a considerable amount of time towards the end of the show and it was very painful on my knees. For the following night, I brought in some padding to wear under my costume to make it more comfortable and ensure I didn't injure myself. For me, post-show I need a time to reflect, assess and adapt for the following performance (Actor 8, email communication).

In this example, the consideration of the actor's exertion in purely physical terms can prevent injury or manage an existing one. Moreover, as physical and emotional exertion is interlinked, unchecked physical exertion implies unmet emotional needs (Reich, [1933] 1990, pp.344-6), especially when one considers these are not one-off stresses, but are regularly experienced throughout a performance run.

Another consideration in regards to physical/emotional exertion is the challenging nature of festival environments or small scale touring. These represent physical challenges for actors that are not merely limited to pre-performance, the performance itself and the post-performance socialisation, but also the energy expenditure from 'lugging a set around,

driving around the country…you felt you had only just finished the last show and you are putting the set up to do the next one' (Actor 13, interview). Similarly, as Zaremba-Byrne stated in an interview on 21 May 2019, the demands of Edinburgh Fringe are not limited to theatre performances, but include the conducting a series of 5-10 minute street-theatre performances, presenting excerpts from the show to passers-by, whilst distributing fliers.

Emotional

Some actors highlight the urgency of emotional needs over physical ones: 'in an emotional performance you need some time alone to cool-down' (Actor 4, skype interview). Similarly, Actor 1 points out that 'during the important performances of our lives, as far as I am concerned, I think it [the cool-down] requires a considerable amount of time' (interview). Conducting a cool-down may reduce the amount of time required - what Actor 1 calls 'considerable' - as well as prevent actors from returning home experiencing what Actor 3 describes as 'a certain dissonance':

> I would say, having someone with me until I go to sleep. Just not to be on my own. And whatever we do together, companionship, if it's to talk, if it's to eat, if it's just to walk around, if it's to have sex, whatever it is, just to not be on my own…because the difference between having all that tension on stage and not having that attention when you are on your own that's where there is a certain dissonance, that's why the loneliness comes (interview).

Actor 3's account illustrates how significant the lack of conscious transitions may be for some actors, from the intensity of performing to the seemingly mundane rhythms of everyday sociality or the return to the private sphere. In the absence of the cool-down, feelings of loneliness and emptiness may emerge: 'the feeling is that of "after" - as in sex…relaxed, but also emptied' (Actor 11, email communication), a common post-performance experience also noted by Bates (1986, p.199) and Szlawieniec-Haw (2020, p.44). Moreover, lack of ordered transitions may be a considerable factor for some actors' resorting to alcohol fuelled socialisation and even substance abuse: 'I've never been much into drugs since leaving university but I know a few actors who like to smoke weed after a show. Quite a bit of cocaine is consumed too' (Actor 9, email communication). Absence of the cool-down and the

subsequent lack of transition from one state to the next, allows unstructured responses to infiltrate and eventually dominate the post-performance phase, with its own particular needs: ‘mentally, you need food and rest, emotionally, also. This depends on how the performance has gone. A warm hug is always the best medicine’ (Actor 15, email communication). In the next section, actors make reference to four parameters that directly affect their physical and emotional state: adrenaline rush, visceral drives, alcohol consumption and reduced sleep.

The role of adrenaline

Interviewed actors regularly referred to the adrenaline rush as a familiar experience that carries them through performance, but also lingers on upon its completion: ‘I have lots of adrenaline after a performance…if a show finishes late at night and I go straight home, I find that I can't sleep due to the adrenaline’ (Actor 5, email communication). Moreover, the post-performance adrenaline rush is also seen as a pleasurable state: ‘I don’t want to go in and do some deep breathing and take all the edge off my adrenaline, I want the opposite, that’s why I do it’ (Actor 13, interview). Similarly, Actor 8 states: ‘when I was younger I found it very easy to ride the adrenaline after a performance and not take time to check in with myself. As I got older I realised how quickly this caused me to burn-out and subsequently give lacklustre performances on following nights’ (email communication). These accounts suggest, that the actors’ exertion from these hormonal changes during the pre-performance and performance phase, may not only determine the management required following the performance, but may also affect the quality of their performances throughout their performance run, which may extend over weeks and months.

Actors trained to recognise and anticipate these stresses, would be able to control their post-performance phase more effectively, as the adrenaline rush symptoms are easy to identify due to their regularity, intensity and particular nature: ‘when a stressful situation occurs and your heart begins to race, your hands begin to sweat, and you start looking for an escape, you have

experienced a textbook case of fight-or-flight response', which may 'last up to an hour' (Hormone Health Network, 2018). Additionally, this skill-set is necessary because the adrenaline rush tends to mask the actors' actual post-performance needs: 'most people are exhausted by the end of a performance but also still running on the adrenaline of the show! When the adrenaline goes, one might get hungry or extremely tired' (Actor 6, email communication). In the long run, exacerbating rather than managing the exertion emanating from the adrenaline rush is neither desirable nor sustainable: 'over time, persistent surges of adrenaline can damage your blood vessels, increase your blood pressure, and elevate your risk of heart attacks or stroke. It can also result in anxiety, weight gain, headaches, and insomnia' (Cafasso, 2018).

Hunger – a visceral drive

Psychologists, such as De Ridder et al. (2014), explain the existence and intensity of visceral drives such as hunger, thirst, pain or exhaustion (2014, p.7), whilst the parameter of hunger was highlighted by all actors interviewed. For example, Actor 10 heads straight into the theatre canteen following a theatre performance (email communication), whilst Actor 4 mentioned going out to socialise and 'get dinner' with fellow actors following the end of a comedic performance (skype interview). Similarly, Actor 1 would also go out and eat 'I was hungry after the performance and I used to go out and eat; my diaphragm had worked overtime' (interview) and Actor 14 notes this as a primary pre-occupation: 'then [after the show] as I feel hungry, I would go out for a meal, lunch or dinner, depending on performance time' (interview). Likewise, Actor 3 stated 'what happens to me after a show, I get really hungry, in a high profile show like this for me I rarely eat, I didn't eat all day, so I was really hungry' (interview).

Managed food intake remains a common preoccupation - because actors with a full stomach will see a reduction of space with which the diaphragm can operate and support their voice

during performances (Nakamura, 1990, p.92). This restriction exacerbates post-performance feelings of hunger, whilst 'visceral states like thirst, hunger, and fatigue can alter motivations, predictions, and even memory' (Williams, et al., 2016, p.897). In addition, despite its regular nature, this pre-performance consideration is difficult to normalise: 'I can't wait to get back into a normal routine…I don't know when to eat anymore' (Filmer, 2006, p.125), although most actors establish pre-performance routines that consistently support voice production: 'I would never eat heavily before the show. I tend to have an apple, before and during the show, it has an enzyme that helps the vocal chords' (Actor 14, interview). Not adhering to the principles of eating early and light, can be counter-productive: 'once I directed a theatre play and pieces of bacon would come out of one my actor's mouth, from his recently consumed sandwich; a well-known actor too' (Actor 16, interview). These accounts suggest that the actors' post-performance needs are not merely a result of the performance exertion itself but also its preparation, which may be several hours long; the consumption of small meals or the abstaining from food altogether is part of this preparation. As a result, visceral drives become important parameters, which when not managed properly, may exacerbate the actors' emotional and physiological activation during the post-performance phase.

Alcohol consumption

Actors also made reference to the consumption of alcohol, especially during post-performance socialisation 'in most cases, I really enjoy socialising after the show…talking to friends and having a drink helps me to relax and unwind' (Actor 5, email communication); '[I] get changed as quickly as possible and get to the pub for a drink' (Actor 6, email). Occasionally, this unconscious marking does not work in the actors' favour: 'I often feel hyperactive after a performance and it takes some time to come down - hence a glass of wine! Unfortunately this quickly leads to feeling exhausted' (Actor 7, email communication). Similarly, Actor 9 describes an explicit link between alcohol, the pre-performance and post-performance phases:

> the thought of acting with a hangover just terrifies me. I certainly drink less now than I did when I was younger. This is probably because I'm more aware of the dangers…if I'm in a show I'll still go for a drink just to socialise. I would never, ever drink anything before going on stage. This thought also absolutely terrifies me. I know actors who do, and some of them manage just fine. And I've been in shows where actors have done this with absolutely disastrous consequences. There are actors with drink problems and I think the job has probably contributed. I know actors whose careers have been ruined by drink. There are also a whole load of actors in AA (Actor 9, email communication).

Actor 9's description of the predominant culture related to post-performance socialisation indicates practices and attitudes cemented, in the absence of any marked process that identifies, meets and prioritises the needs of the performer.

At the same time, there are instances when actors have no professional or private commitments besides the performance itself. This is not unusual, especially for those actors that have yet to start a family, those without producing duties beyond the performance itself or those that find themselves performing outside the familiar environment of their home city for an extended period of time. Actor 13 points out that in such cases, established post-performing culture predominates and alcohol becomes an informal complimentary process after the performance:

> if you are somewhere for a week or you are doing a run for a couple of months somewhere and you don't have kids or responsibilities, then your cool-down would be going to the pub and drinking until you had enough or the pub closes and then perhaps drinking some more after the pub closes and staying up late (interview).

In the absence of a structured and systematic cool-down phase, actors are not only faced with the prospect of being unprepared for the quick transition that follows, but also the absence of comfort provided by friends, family and a familiar environment; this leaves actors depending on their colleagues for companionship and socialisation, which is usually accompanied with alcohol.

Overall, the parameter of alcohol consumption is so significant for actors, that there are theatre productions whose main highlight and attraction for attending audiences is the debilitating effect of those preparations on a single actor, for the benefit of the performance. One such example is the production *Shitfaced Shakespeare* 'a Shakespeare production in which a different actor is drunk every night' (Actor 6, email communication):

> each night we take on one of The Bard's most exciting theatrical works and one carefully selected cast member is charged with drinking for 4 hours prior to showtime. The remaining sober cast are forced to fight their way through the show while incorporating, rectifying, justifying and generally improvising round their inebriated castmate (shitfacedshakespeare.com, 2020).

In this performing context, the main trigger of entertainment for audiences is the destabilised state of that actor and their inability to fully adhere to the performance score; how does one cool-down from this state? Actor 6 indicates that in these productions the process of the cool-down 'involves sobering up the drunken actor and feeding them' (email communication). These accounts confirm significant post-performance physical and emotional needs, the lack of any structured way to meet them and the default cultural practice of alcohol consumption following theatre performances. Could such unwritten post-performance protocols be interfering with a good night's sleep and thus preventing actors from getting the recuperation they require?

Late nights and disturbed sleep

Although sleep deprivation is generally associated with a variety of health concerns, not only for actors but everyone, such as diabetes and obesity (Buxton et al., 2012), it is here examined within the context of actors committing to performance runs conducted over several weeks or months. For example, in the absence of the cool-down, actors return home unable to feel relaxed enough to go sleep, when hyper activity still lingers on in the body:

> it was a huge dissonance. Because I was sitting on my sofa, in front of the television, staring into thin air and actually not doing anything, I wrote an email to my co-producer to explain to him I was in that limbo state, being buzzed and high at the same time as being low and depressed. There is a big gap in your soul for like an hour (Actor 3, interview).

Actor 3's description indicates the lack of transition by the use of 'limbo state', as well as the adrenaline that lingers on: 'buzzed and high' – a lack of agency that renders one incapable of doing more than stare 'into thin air', passively waiting for the effect of the adrenaline rush to subside. Similarly, Actor 5 notes that 'if a show finishes late at night and I go straight home, I find that I can't sleep due to the adrenaline' (email communication). Here, both Actor 3 and Actor 5 link their inability to manage their cool-down phase at home with late nights and disturbed sleep. Along the same lines, Actor 9 points out that: 'when I'm working in the theatre I like getting up late and going to bed late (when I can). Of course it is the complete opposite when you're working in film and TV and you usually have to be up at about 5-6 am, so it makes for a rather topsy-turvy life' (email communication).

These accounts suggest, that actors bypassing the cool-down phase arrive home having to decompress from both artistic and social performances, well into the night, privately. In addition, sleep disturbance becomes a physical exertion consideration, a by-product of this hyper tension experienced at home, which is currently normalised by professional actors that have to perform several times a week, for several weeks or months, on tour or festival environments (Filmer, 2006, p.125). For example, Actor 13 mentions an episode explaining this inability to properly recuperate at night following theatre performances, whilst managing parental duties at home:

> one of the last major jobs I did as a performer was…[at] a very big company and they were partying a lot and it was a very physically demanding show and we worked hard and played hard and when I joined I would have been mid-forties then. Now I didn't cool-down in the same way [going to the bar afterwards] because I didn't think I could, I didn't think I had the energy to go out with these guys, while I had children…I normally would have one drink after the show and then I would go home…it was a long-running show, it didn't come down until 22:15 drenched in sweat, by the time you got changed it was 22:25 or 22:30; one drink, 23:00. Sometimes not even a drink, sometimes a juice, which was new for me. I would sit there for half an hour and then I'd get the bus home about 23:30 or 23:45. But in my house, my youngest daughter was in a phase of waking up all the time…So I was getting in at 00:00 by which point I was really tired but normally she would be waking up or something like that. So instead of [my partner] doing it I thought: 'I'll do it' because I was still awake. So then it would be like

> getting to 01:00 o'clock, and she would often wake up in the middle of the night as well and I think sometimes I ended up doing it because I was more awake still, I never gotten into a deep sleep. Then it was morning and it was school, someone had to take them. So sometimes I would try to sleep in the day, to try to catch up from this, I never really did and I got very, very ill from that (interview).

Actor 13's account indicates the dangers for actors failing to recuperate by getting enough quality sleep. The show ending as late as '22:15', the lack of a cool-down despite being 'drenched in sweat', the normalising of post-performance needs from this 'long-running show' in duration, all collectively considered become pertinent parameters leading to disturbed sleep. Moreover, Actor 13's post-performance needs, clashing with the demands of family life at home resulted in never getting into 'deep sleep' and as a result getting 'very ill from that'. Littlehales (2016) calls deep sleep 'the bottom of the stairs', where 'the brain produces the slowest-frequency brainwaves', a phase which may last between 90 to 180 minutes, well documented in its importance in restoring the body, including the 'release of the growth hormone…to grow new cells, repair tissues, recover our bodies from the daily grinds and essentially be (and feel) rejuvenated' (2016, p.27). Similarly, Jones (2017) points out that among other functions, sleep regulates emotion, prevents inflammation, commits experiences to memory and controls metabolic function (2017). Systematic cool-down processes consciously managing stresses and accommodating transitions, would improve the transition from the social to the private sphere, including the entering of relaxed and sleep states later in the evening, so important in resting and more broadly recuperating the working actor. Seen more broadly, the cool-down can assist actors to balance conflicting personal and professional demands, which can lead to the overstretching of their energy resources, inflicting physical illness and potential loss of income.

Other actors provided similar accounts in relation to reduced sleep patterns: '[I] sleep a little more [in the morning] if I slept late the night before' (Actor 2, interview) and 'there would be a day I would say I will allow myself to sleep in, because I have two shows tonight' (Actor 3,

interview). However ‘sleeping in’ is not always possible for all actors, as some are having to wake up early the next morning to teach, conduct an audition, work at a TV or film studio or take the younger members of their family to school the next morning, as in the case of Actor 13. Quality uninterrupted sleep (Littlehales, 2016, pp.39-40) then becomes central in the process of recuperating from performance, which for optimal results, should be considered as the main recuperation event, with its own pre- and post-sleep routines (2016, pp.37-56).

These accounts indicate that irrespective of the particularity of each actor’s schedule, the balancing of their professional and private life is a continual challenge that requires constant adjustment and management (Szlawieniec-Haw, 2020, p.102). Moreover, getting enough hours of sleep should be considered paramount for all actors and should be emphasised at training environments. What about the actors’ often irregular schedule? Actors are not the only professionals facing such challenges and accordingly Littlehales (2016) proposes the utility of shorts naps during the day, to add to the total number of minutes of sleep required each week, commonly used by many professionals, including night shift workers, Nasa pilots and Olympic athletes (2016, pp.61-2).

In addition to the dangers of sleep deprivation, regular or excessive alcohol consumption has long been known to cause dehydration (Eggleton, 1942), when feelings of thirst wake us up, interrupting our sleep to rehydrate, thus further reducing its quality (Hydralyte, 2020). Getting enough sleep and preventing the onset of dehydration due to immediate post-performance alcohol-fuelled socialisation, should be recognised by actors as pertinent concerns requiring management; late nights can affect how actors experience the next performance and in the long term, how they fare throughout the performance run (Mandell, 2017). Actor Lynn Redgrave confirms the importance of managing ones energy resources: ‘strength and stamina – good health. I put those before talent…acting is tiring: it requires a

lot of work, a lot of muscle, an enormous amount of voice…and you do that for eight shows a week…acting is just hard, hard work' (Bates, 1986, p.141). Moreover and in addition to their stage performances, actors may have to conduct early morning work, such as TV, film or other non-actor related employment or personal commitments. In view of their multiple personal and professional demands, the effects of alcohol during the post-performance phase combined with sleep deprivation, can be seen to exacerbate the actors' already significant physical and emotional post-performance exertion.

Second post-performance concern: self-review of the performance

In chapter 2, three mental considerations were identified in secondary sources and considered: identity management, self-exposure and self-review. However, since none of the 16 actors providing interviews discussed the first two, the following section will focus on their accounts in relation to the post-performance review of the performance and argue that conscious self-review management can prove advantageous for actors, for two reasons. First, self-review can assist in the improvement of performance, by encouraging actors to revisit aspects or moments of the performance that satisfies their professional curiosity and solves practical challenges encountered on stage – I discuss this in the subsection 'self-reviewing and the artist'. It is not only the performance score that is in a process of flux and continuous development (Mitchell, 2009, p.214), but also actors as artists, whose every performance represents another opportunity for the enhancing of their skills, through the realisation of a role and the contact with the audience.

Second, reserving the privilege of a private self-review prior to immediate post-performance socialisation, can contribute to the maintenance of the actors' confidence, as well as to the honing of the actors' objectivity and autonomy - I discuss this in the subsection 'self-

reviewing and the public'. This is because actors can be vulnerable in the face of immediate post-performance verbal critique (Hagen, 1973, p.4) or written reviews (Bates, 1986, p.59); (Luckhurst and Veltman, 2001, p.108), irrespective of their positive or negative nature. By learning to be self-reliant during the post-performance phase, actors can maintain or even enhance their sense of self-reliance and agency over their work (Hagen, 1973, pp.192-9).

Self-reviewing and the artist

Actor 3 states that following a theatre performance: 'there is a lot of contemplating going on, a lot of going back and forth' (interview). Similarly, Actor 1 points out:

> I see the film, if one could say that, of the performance. Not in a linear order but broken up, I never see them in order but like a jigsaw puzzle…something in fast forward, then rewinds to go back to the beginning [of the show] then goes in the middle and generically follows this broken-up mode…what I remember are those moments that have not been exactly what I would have wanted [I recall] not those that 'hit the mark' [but] those that did not (interview).

So, actors return to what has immediately taken place on stage, emphasising on what felt awkward or what could be further improved; a process of constant re-evaluation of their overall performance, which is a direct continuation from the daily and consecutive rehearsals. For example, Actor 15 states: 'it takes a few hours to properly relax, when you do a flashback of the day, beginning from your entrance into your dressing room and assessing your performance: what grading would you give yourself' (email communication). Likewise, Actor 16 placed post-performance self-review at the top of the list:

> to self-critique; what did I not do well? Because sometimes all actors have questions…or we remember something that we did not do [on stage]. And sometimes we discover elements that neither the direction has provided nor have we…I will slowly consider what it is that I did two hours on stage with my colleagues, and so on (interview).

These accounts recognise the post-performance needs of actors to re-visit aspects of the performance, to evaluate and to make mental notes. A systematic cool-down which recognises and accommodates this need, may make this evaluative process more conscious and effective for actors. Another reason why conscious self-reviewing processes should be regularly conducted by actors is that self-reviewing assessments can affect their mood and

confidence: ‘if the show has gone well I sometimes feel euphoric, conversely, if I am not 100% happy with my performance I can feel pretty low’ (Actor 7, email communication); ‘depends on how the performance has gone’ (Actor 15, email communication). It is worth noting that both feelings of success and failure mentioned by Actor 7 and Actor 15 are superimposed in the actor’s imagination, often reflecting exaggerated feelings of success or failure. However, the absence of any objectivity in these feelings is irrelevant; if actors feel the performance has not gone well, it is difficult to shake-off negative impressions:

> if the other actors had a really bad night…I could see that [a cool-down] really helping them clearing their minds. They would be fixated on a bad performance. That can really screw an actor up and [if] they think they done [a] horrible [job] but they really haven’t, the audience doesn’t know but the actor knows they did a bad job (Actor 4, skype interview).

Similarly, for Actor 3 self-review is paramount:

> always, always. Not in a bad way and also kind of thinking to myself what do I think happened and what actually happened, which are two very different things…For the most part you won’t really know unless your director was there and told you. Or if it’s been filmed and you can go and watch it afterwards (interview).

These accounts indicate that the process of immediate self-reviewing is a recurring concern during the post-performance phase, allowing actors to mentally re-visit any aspect of the performance that may require re-assessment or clarification. Moreover, Konijn’s (2000) research indicates that ‘the actor’s emotional state during or after a performance was not so much determined by the emotional condition of the impersonated character, but by the degree to which the actor had succeeded in his aims’ (2000, p.108). This suggests that the positive or negative mood during the post-performance phase may largely depend on the actors’ subjective perception of the performance. However, as actors are not actually watching the production but enacting it on stage, their perception of the effectiveness of their role, as well as the overall performance score may be distorted. A post-performance mental review could assist in maintaining perspective, acknowledging the possibility of reduced objectivity during this phase, without the need to be definitive (negatively or positively) on what is essentially work in progress (Mitchell, 2009, p.214). In this way, conscious post-performance self-

reviews should be seen as essential for actors, to ensure that 'good' performances are kept into perspective or actors risk taking the next night's performance challenges for granted. Equally, 'poor' performances also need to be kept into perspective, as it is imperative that actors maintain high levels of confidence to continue performing to the best of their ability for the duration of the performance run.

Self-reviewing and the public

Actors do not only have to regularly manage their internal self-reviewing mechanism, but also external reviews, verbal or written. Actor William Dafoe points out: 'in theatre criticism is deadly. If an actor reads a line about their performance such as "there is this extraordinarily moving scene in the piece where the man strokes the woman's face and kisses her on the cheek" that moment is going to be ruined! Too much information is bad' (Luckhurst and Veltman, 2001, p.32). Following Dafoe's position, verbal or written reviews can be seen as representing additional mental challenges for actors. By privately reviewing the performance just ended in a conscious and measured way, actors reserve the benefit of a first critical assessment, prior to any external critique, in order to maintain some control over their confidence and faith in the performance score. The self-review should be seen as a reminder to performers, that no one is more aware of the rehearsal process and the intentions of the performance score than its director and actors: 'you won't really know unless your director was there and told you or if it's been filmed and you can go and watch it afterwards' (Actor 3, interview). This highlights that although lay audience feedback is inevitable and often exciting in its reception, it is the directors' input that remains primary, valuable and relevant.

In the absence of the show's director providing meaningful feedback, Actor 8 points out that discussing the show following the theatre performance can be problematic:

> I try not to let conversation sit on the topic of the show for too long if it doesn't seem to be progressing, unless it is the final night. For me, if I talk too much about the work when I am not in the headspace to enact it, I can

> become overwhelmed and begin to second-guess the work that has already been done (email communication).

In regards to the discussing of 'the show for too long', Actor 8 makes a useful distinction: between 'final night' and a performance run still in progress; this is not surprising. Once the performance run has come to an end, any external input can no longer affect the actors' next day's performance. However, discussing 'the show for too long' during a performance run in progress can be counter-productive: 'I can become overwhelmed and begin to second-guess the work that has already been done' (Actor 8, email communication). This is something that Actor 9 also commented on, as a potentially negative place actors occasionally find themselves: 'I've been acting for over 40 years and I really know that it is a totally bad idea to give constructive criticism or say negative things about the show immediately afterwards…I don't want to hear it while I still have to go on doing the show' (email communication).

These accounts suggest, that the post-performance maintenance of confidence is of primary importance for actors, because social interactions can be unpredictable in this regard, with audiences eager to offer critique that may be characterised by hyperbole; positive or negative in nature. Actor 8 indicates that the receipt of such feedback can vary from being 'appropriate', to 'constructing', to 'negative':

> it's nice to get immediate feedback on your work and where appropriate, take it on board. I find that people who are good at what they do are also very good at giving constructive criticism, so it's easy to let the people who are purely negative have their say and then move on from it (email communication).

However, not all actors may find this navigation comfortable following a theatre performance: 'I feel slightly embarrassed seeing people after a show and I am always terrified in case they haven't liked it. For this reason I am very sparing with the truth whenever I go round or meet friends after I have seen them in a show' (Actor 9, email communication). Responses on this issue vary and actors express a wide spectrum of responses, anything from

Actor 8's more pragmatic navigating between a variety of post-performance social interactions, to Actor 9's careful consideration of personal and other actors' needs.

This diversity of responses includes the avoidance of the public altogether: 'I also do not like it when viewers want to talk to me about the play - positive or negative - no matter' (Actor 11, email communication), as well as the sharing of feelings of success with the public:

> it's an amazing feeling. I have given all my best to the audience, I receive the applause and just afterwards, I feel happy, light, relieved, splendid and it's easy to jump directly to my friends and eating with colleagues in the canteen. Great. Even to speak about the performance in front of the spectators is inspiring because of the great feeling that my preparation for the performance was right and my ambition to interpret the character has achieved the best level (Actor 10, email communication).

Despite such a wide spectrum of responses available in regards to immediate socialisation, self-review becomes an important post-performance consideration, because in order to retain perspective actors require managing their own internal critic, as well as external reviews, oral or written, lay or expert; unless, as in the case of Actor 11 and Actor 16, post-performance socialisation is altogether avoided. In the following section, the transition from symbolic/artistic contexts to social performance represents a third post-performance concern.

Third post-performance concern: the transition from the artistic to the social

The third concern verbalised by actors is their transition from the artistic performance to subsequent social interactions:

> I recently did a…play that was quite an emotional performance, and I found the transition quite awkward with this one. I found that I wasn't quite in the right mind-set to socialise immediately afterwards and actually found it quite hard to do so. I found that I needed a few minutes just to myself after the show, to reset a bit before speaking to others (Actor 5, email communication).

Actor 5's account indicates that although post-performance arrangements made prior to the show can easily be set in advance, the effects of performance on the actor cannot be predicted

in the same way. However, post-performance social arrangements remain and are expected to be met, leaving actors feeling obligated to succumb and honour them, over and above their psychophysical post-performance and smooth transition needs. Instead, a post-performance cool-down would mark the transition from the artistic to the social and provide the time and space for actors to re-assess their needs, whilst determining whether to honour pre-arranged post-performance socialisation, on the actors' terms.

Actors require having this level of agency during this phase, because immediate post-performance socialisation can exacerbate performance stresses, indicating that the transition from the artistic to the social sphere is neither natural nor without effort: 'the energy that you gain whilst playing continues after the performance, as you bow to the applause and later in the hugs and the shaking of hands in your dressing room. It takes a few hours to properly relax' (Actor 15, email communication). This account indicates that immediately following the theatre performance, exertion lingers on, requiring 'a few hours to properly relax', whilst some audience members find themselves backstage to congratulate the actors, which may oscillate between 'wanting to be hospitable and wanting to be alone for a little while' (Schechner, 2002, p.211), delaying and interfering with a smooth post-performance transition:

> in the dressing room I could stay for an hour. It depends on the audience that comes and disturbs, on the colleagues that may need something, with the theatre space itself, in case they need to close early. I believe this [audience entering the backstage area] should be prohibited…the dressing rooms are invaded…they just open the door, many don't even knock. This familiarity, I call it 'the tyranny of familiarity'; what I mean is that there should be some distance (Actor 16, interview).

Accounts from Actor 15 and Actor 16 indicate that audiences entering the backstage area during the immediate post-performance phase are effectively preventing actors from conducting an undisturbed transition from the artistic to the social sphere. This dynamic removes the actors' agency in prioritising their own needs over and above those of the

audience: ‘you have no time to even take your costume off. Ideally you would ask for some additional time but how can you decline to beloved friends or enthusiastic members of the audience their hasty joy?’ (Actor 15, email communication). This absence renders actors vulnerable in negotiating the post-performance phase as best they can:

> in a lot of shows here for instance people go out to the pub afterwards. I am not a pub person…I wouldn’t necessarily do that after every show. I would kind stay for five minutes, just say goodbye and just go home. But I guess for a lot of people here, that’s how they wind down. They go to the pub, they go to the bar or go out dancing or whatever – I just go home (Actor 3, interview).

Actor 3 confirms the culture of perpetual performance - in the absence of a cool-down protocol within the theatre space - leaves no other option but to go home, without any conscious transition. Actor 11 also goes home immediately: ‘mostly, there is no transition, because I almost always go straight home…since I do not drink alcohol, I retire to the private’ (Actor 11, email communication). At the same time, going home immediately upon the completion of the performance, without any marking, without a cool-down, is ‘dramatic’:

> if you have no guests or no one coming in, it’s basically just kind of leaving. Which for me I always feel it is really kind of dramatic. From one moment you are on stage and you are completely immersed in whatever you are doing and you get your applause…and all of a sudden you are kind of outside with your bags, still with a bit of make up on, yeah, basically on your own…and you kind of have to deal with whatever it is you think about the show, you think about what you did good what you didn’t and there is a lot of loneliness happening after that (Actor 3, interview).

Actor 3’s account is particularly useful, as it reflects the actors’ need to self-evaluate, recognises the post-performance emotions that linger on, as well as the lack of any conscious transition from performing to the everyday rhythms, which for Actor 3 is sudden enough to be considered ‘dramatic’. Instead, an ordered and systematic cool-down would include a private self-review, the acknowledgment of the emotions that linger on, as well as the management of the adrenaline rush and visceral drives. Collectively, the awareness of these needs and the attempt to meet them would contribute to a smooth transition from the ‘applause’ to being all alone ‘outside with your bags’, into everyday socialisation and the subsequent demands of the private sphere.

The variant nature of post-performance social interactions

Notwithstanding those post-performance needs, it is also important to consider that any transition can be equal to the type of social interaction that may follow: 'I prefer to wind down with other actors to be honest, when friends or family come to a theatre performance it can be a bit excruciating meeting up afterwards' (Actor 7, email communication). It is usual for actors to show preference to the company of cast mates, rather than family or friends during the post-performance phase, also noted by movement teacher Anna Healey: 'I think that is why people often socialise only with each other…because you need to have that outlet of "oh, that went wrong", you sort of need to talk through things…some people are desperate for that' (Healey, zoom interview). Moreover, noted is Actor 7's preference 'to wind down' with other actors rather than their own family and friends, despite the importance of family support for this career (Szlawieniec-Haw, 2020, p.101). In contrast, Actor 12 prefers speaking to friends and family: 'I don't like to speak with all colleagues but only with the ones their opinion I respect. I like to see friends and family attending and prefer their post-performance socialisation than with fans and complete strangers' (telephone interview). These insights confirm a wide spectrum of post-performance social needs, as well as a diversity of dynamics during this phase, suggesting that the transition between performance and social or private contexts cannot be ignored.

The variety of post-performance needs is confirmed by several accounts: for example, Actor 4 mentions going out socially with members of the cast, not with friends or family (skype interview), Actor 1 would only go out to eat alone or with a partner (interview), whilst theatre manager/Actor 2 shares the post-performance socialisation with as many people as possible: fellow actors, friends and members of the audience within the theatre space (interview). In total contrast, Actor 11 actively prevents all post-performance socialisation: 'mostly I play a round of Sudoku and then go home through the back door of the theatre or sometimes to the

cafeteria, but there my colleagues sit and smoke…since I do not drink alcohol, I retire to the private' (email communication). This corresponds with Actor 16's view: 'I have no inclination to go anywhere afterwards, this is absolutely clear. But they [the audience] come backstage. I don't care whether they do. But I don't want to waste my time, I want to go home. Rarely have I gone out [following a theatre performance] during my 60 years in the theatre' (interview). With the exception of Actor 3, Actor 11 and Actor 16, actors indicated a varying exposure to what Mast (1986) calls 'non-dramatic impression management', interlinked with preferred career outcomes (1986, p.136).

Non-dramatic impression management

The diversity of those post-performance socialisations implies the acknowledgement of different social dynamics, which require consideration and management: 'for me this completely depends on who I am meeting with and how well I feel the night went' (Actor 8, email communication). This response also implies that actors may assume a celebratory mood if the performance has gone 'well' and equally be less inclined to meet audiences later if it has gone 'badly' (Konijn, 2000, p.108). This is confirmed by Actor 10: 'it's an amazing feeling…to speak about the performance in front of the spectators is inspiring because of the great feeling that my preparation for the performance was right and my ambition to interpret the character has achieved the best level' (email communication), suggesting a correlation between 'good performances' and perpetual performance.

Other actors do not accept that a distinction between a 'good' or 'poor' performance makes any difference on how they experience their post-performance socialisation. For example, Actor 16 thinks that the post-performance phase is characterised by the actors' seeking of further approval:

> I think they seek more gratification; however following the performance a certain amount of time in silence is required. The actor needs to be silent, after two hours speaking the text and often an important text, to become

> speechless, to be silent for a little. Actors cannot be in a condition to go out and entertain themselves and have their drinks (interview).

Here Actor 16, much like Actor 11, dismisses post-performance socialisation altogether and makes no distinction between family, friends or professional post-performance commitments, suggesting silence as the preferable post-performance protocol at the theatre or at home. The indication that some actors may be looking for further 'gratification' during the post-performance phase can be reinforced by Actor 2's account:

> the performance ends and I come back out again and the people approach me there and then. There is no me going back to the dressing room to wait for them to come and find me. [In the dressing room] I take my costume off, [I go back onto the stage] and pretend to return a prop back [on stage] and they come to me. Automatically, [I want] to receive the positive and negative [response] (interview).

For this actor, the preferable post-performing approach is perpetual performing. However, Actor 2's following account suggests this may not be a conscious choice but rather a compulsive response, that the actor is unable or unwilling to control.

Perpetual performance

Social interactions characterised by lack of control can prove detrimental to the actor's social image (Mast, 1986, p.136):

> when the performance ended, I don't know how it came to me, I went to pick up a prop [from the stage] and [I] say: 'I felt you were a little embarrassed today, you did not like the play'. Why did I say that? Anyway. One [member of the audience] gave me a review [there and then], then the audience left. This man [who gave me the review] was from Theatromania, a blog that goes around and watches plays. And it noted 'we were unpleasantly surprised by the protagonist who when the play ended came back on stage to pick up an item from the stage and asked us "you were a little embarrassed today, you did not like the play" and as a result some [members of the audience] felt obliged to congratulate him' (Actor 2, interview).

The reviewer's account of Actor 2's perpetual performing, confirms Mast (1986) that lack of control in this phase can be detrimental for the actors' professional objectives. Without a cool-down to properly mark the artistic from the social performance, the actors' post-performance hyper state may affect their decision making (Loewenstein, 1996), resulting in atypical behaviour, unchecked and unfiltered (Williams et al., 2016). Viewed in this way,

Actor 16's and Actor 2's account represent polar opposites in their post-performance practice, the one dismissing the use of any post-performance sociality (Actor 16), whilst the other engaging socially as quickly as possible (Actor 2). Similarly to Actor 2's account, there are other actors verbalising the challenging nature of post-performance socialisation: 'so, everything is about us and being on stage. And when we get off-stage it is no longer about us. I mean, we are back to the real world. And it's a switch you have to prepare in your mind…I've had people that said "you're not on stage anymore"' (Actor 3, interview). In this account, the adrenaline rush and excitement emanating from the performance, feeds directly into the excitement of seeing familiar faces and anticipating their support and critique. This experience is echoed by Actor 15:

> I remember following my performance in another…play…[Then] I would go out happy and almost gave a second performance with jokes and talking to friends and others who waited for me. One of them scolded me the next day 'you did not allow me to remain in the poetic atmosphere that you created and to take it with me as I left the theatre, you've spoiled it' he said, and he was absolutely right (email communication).

In these examples of perpetual performance, a member of the audience perceives Actor 2's immediate interaction with the audience as burdensome, 'some felt obliged to congratulate him' (interview); another perceives Actor 3's post-performance social interactions as over the top, explicitly requesting them to return to the demands of everyday sociality by saying 'you're not on stage anymore' (interview); and yet another says to Actor 15: 'you've spoiled it' (email communication). Perpetual performance not only eliminates the opportunity for actors to make a conscious and gradual transition, but may also deprive the audience from experiencing 'transportation' (Schechner, 1985, p.125); to return home changed from the performance, retaining the thoughts and emotions experienced.

The momentary need for silence or privacy

Some actors specifically mention the avoidance of all post-performance sociality, as in the case of Actor 11: 'mostly I play a round of Sudoku and then go home through the back door of the theatre or sometimes to the cafeteria, but there my colleagues sit and smoke…since I

do not drink alcohol, I retire to the private' (email communication). Similarly, Actor 16 states:

> I normally leave very late from the theatre…I remain backstage for a considerable amount of time, because I change clothes, change mood, I leave the theatrical speech behind and return to everyday parlance…to start with, after every performance, there is a deafening silence…inside you...your organism is required to return to its normal rhythm (interview).

These accounts indicate that not all actors may find comfort in immediate post-performance socialisation: 'I find it hard to focus and make the effort to chat to people immediately following a show' (Actor 7, email communication), whilst Actor 6 states: 'if it's been quite a difficult, emotionally draining performance, it can help to take a few minutes and sit and process what's just happened by yourself or have a shower and relax a bit before becoming sociable' (email communication). Likewise for Actor 5, post-performance socialisation is not always desirable following a theatre performance, at least not immediately: 'I found that I needed a few minutes just to myself after the show, to reset a bit before speaking to others' (email communication). This need for privacy or momentary silence is confirmed by Actor 16:

> I have no desire to go [out]. [I am] not in a bad mood, but in a good mood, but I don't like it, I prefer to withdraw…I also believe that [when you perform] great texts, you do not need much more, the texts themselves have immersed you, you do not need to go out dancing afterwards, the texts dance within you, the role dances within you. You feel blessed (interview).

Although the requirement for privacy or silence may not be echoed by all actors, it may be occasionally required, as indicated by Actor 3, Actor 5, Actor 6, Actor 11, Actor 15 and Actor 16, depending on their particular circumstances and mood or the perceived efficacy of the performance from night to night.

Initial findings

Overall, interviews reveal a variety of physical/emotional, mental and social post-performance needs and the actors' inability to meet them in a systematic and conscious way.

Unmanaged post-performances stresses can result in the normalisation of atypical behaviours, including the consumption of anti-anxiety medication or/and alcohol, leading to or exacerbating sleep deprivation and burn-out. Also worth noting, is the consideration of the private sphere, as a place incorporating its own demands, requiring substantial energy reserves in its own right. The variety of personal and professional needs that become apparent during the post-performance transition, reinforce the necessity of a cool-down process taking place immediately following the theatre performance within the theatre space and not later at home, in accordance with the communal nature of theatre processes, which are primarily public and collaborative.

Finally, interviews indicated that self-reviewing and post-performance social interactions are particularly important for actors. Not all performances go as planned and as a result not all actors leave the stage elated; some are often troubled or insecure about the overall effectiveness of the production or their own performance score. This chapter provided indication of this variety of responses: some actors avoid socialisation altogether (Actor 3; Actor 11; Actor 16), one becomes agoraphobic (Actor 1), others need a little quiet time (Actor 4; Actor 9), others yet are actively pursuing immediate socialisation (Actor 2; Actor 3; Actor 7; Actor 12; Actor 13; Actor 15), whilst Actor 14 passively submits to it. For some actors post-performance socialisation is largely linked with the effectiveness of each theatre production (Actor 5; Actor 6; Actor 10) and Actor 8 (the only actor to offer a cool-down) prefers this socialisation to involve other theatre makers rather than friends and family. This spectrum of responses reflects a variety of needs, which may shift over time and from one performance or production to the next. Actors require cool-down training, to provide them with the confidence and agency to manage such wide ranging post-performance needs, emerging from the particular culture of each theatre company, the intensity of specific roles or the working conditions encountered.

Actors' accounts also reveal that post-performance challenges are largely unknown to audiences. This implies that any change of post-performance culture may not only require the training and establishment of systematic and regular post-performance cool-down processes, but also the re-ordering of the audiences' expectations during this phase. The dynamic between audiences and actors during the post-performance phase is further discussed in the following chapter, where professional theatre companies attempt to incorporate the cool-down following their performances.

5. The cool-down in practice

Introduction

This chapter reflects on the participation of professional theatre companies and the implementation of the cool-down from their actors, as well as insights from other theatre makers. Following this practical component, actors provided their accounts in face-to-face interviews. The collaborations are examined one at a time, in chronological order and the feedback is divided thematically, on the interrelated but also distinct concerns of physical/emotional, mental and social exertion. The insights provided by theatre makers in this chapter represent a rare successful attempt in engaging professional working actors with the questions of the cool-down on a practical level, over and above theoretical considerations discussed elsewhere in this thesis. Rare, because when cool-down approaches take place in professional settings, their regularity and impact do not become the focal point of analysis (Schechner, 1985). Successful, because actors refrain from conducting such processes (Meyer-Dinkgräfe, 2013); (Mandell, 2017), unless the cool-down is considered within workshop (Saivetz, 1998); (Wangh, 2000) or training environments (Kurtz, 2011).

Approaching theatre companies

Over a period of 18 months, companies were approached via email or during face-to-face meetings; in Austria, Greece, UK and the USA. Professional companies were preferred over amateur ones, as well as over final show productions within training environments. This choice was meant to accurately reflect the pressures of working environments; the attitudes of actors and their directors on the cool-down; the complexity of arranging post-performance processes that take place in busy theatre spaces (side-by-side the work of stage managers and front of house staff); the movement of audiences within the theatre building following a

performance; amongst other considerations, including the realities of touring and the constant adaptation from one performance space to the next.

For the purposes of this research, in addition to raising interest in the UK, I visited Vienna (once) and Athens (twice) to suggest collaborations. USA-based companies such as the Skylight Theatre in Los Angeles, California and The Guthrie Theatre in Minneapolis, Minnesota were also approached. In Austria, this research suggested collaborations with the Salzburg International Festival, the English Theatre of Vienna, the Open House Theatre and Kosmos Theatre. Similarly in Greece, I reached out to theatre companies via personal contacts built over the years during my work as an actor. Finally in the UK, The Actor's Centre, The National Theatre, Wilton's Music Hall, Just Some Theatre (based in Manchester) are some of the companies approached, whilst personal connections built over the years as a working actor in London, were also utilised.

From the three professional companies that agreed (verbally and in writing) to undertake this post-performance process, two companies proceeded in doing so; approximately a 66% participation rate. From the two companies that went through both stages of the research (cool-down practice and interview), the first one completed 50% of all tasks, whilst the second company completed 20%. In comparison and in a similar study, Kurtz (2011) attempted to apply the cool-down in post-performance training environment settings, with only one of the two productions completing all the tasks; a 50% participation rate.

The regular and systematic conducting of the cool-down presented an important challenge: the unfamiliarity of cool-down practice, as contemporary actors neither receive theoretical nor practical post-performance guidance at training environments. Despite this, I opted against the organisation of workshops that would familiarise actors with the concept of the

cool-down, for two reasons. First, the conducting of such processes in workshop settings is largely out of context; actors participating in a workshop do not face the difficulties, exertion or length of a performance score for up to eight times a week (Mandell, 2017), have no audience to perform to (Konjin, 2000) and face no pressure to immediately socialise with eagerly awaiting audiences during the post-performance phase (Christoffersen, 1993); (Schechner, 2002). Second, I wanted to ensure that actors faced the proposed cool-down with fresh eyes, preventing the influencing of their responses. Also, I refrained from leading the post-performance cool-down, ensuring actors retain agency in this phase. In doing so, I trusted that the actors' professional training, combined with my suggested cool-down instructions would not require further clarification.

Why develop a new cool-down approach?

Practitioners and researchers have on occasion experimented with immediate post-performance approaches (Schechner, 1985); (Meyer-Dinkgräfe, 2013) and processes (Kurtz, 2011), including Bloch's (1993) 'step-out', which represents the most highly recommended post-performance protocol (Barton, 2003); (Kalawski, 2011); (Sacay-Bagwell, 2013). However, without the appropriate certification required in Alba Emoting (Baker, 2008), I was reluctant to incorporate it and suggest it to actors. Instead, I developed the Contemporary Cool-Down, drawing from contemporary actors' accounts in Chapter 4, secondary sources in Chapter 2 and my own experiences as an actor. Drawing from these sources, the meeting of three distinct post-performance needs were thematically identified - physical/emotional, mental and social.

The Contemporary Cool-Down

1) Actors walk around the space freely, sit on a chair or lie down on the floor on their backs with their eyes open, in silence. They become aware of their breath, body temperature, the

adrenaline rush and their emotional state. One is to allow the body to become conscious of this hyper-state and merely observe it: the vocal strain, the areas of the body that may be tight, hot or painful. Actors may stretch and take note of new or recurring injuries that may have taken place during the performance. Actors acknowledge the intensity of their visceral drives, in other words how thirsty, hungry or exhausted they may be and consider the immediate replenishment of these needs with liquids and food.

- Focus: Personal physical/emotional state
- Duration: 5-10 minutes

2) Actors now begin to mentally evaluate the performance just passed. Self-review, a process of objectification, aims at artistically evaluating the performance and reinforcing the separation between the actor and the role. Actors are meant to re-connect with themselves, step back from the character they are portraying, whilst recalling the performance in a linear or fragmented way. This includes parts of the performance score that may have been successful and other sections that may have worked less well, making mental or written notes. Those moments may be used as a reminder of the overall artistic intentions of the performance, as well as the role. Self-review aims at maintaining high levels of confidence in the actors' skills and improving the performance score, as every performance should be considered work-in-progress.

It is important not to be overly self-critical during this time. Few things are within the absolute control of the actor, within the context of a collaborative process incorporating the producer, the director, an artistic team comprising of designers (music, lighting, set and costume), other actors, technicians, stage managers, front of house staff and of course, the audience. Performance represents the main event of a collective effort developing over time

and its evolving nature further underlines its unpredictability; consequently, actors' self-reviews require being measured.

- Focus: Artistic self-evaluation
- Duration: 5-10 minutes

3) Actors now prepare to leave the theatre space. They remember/conduct practical considerations, such as the replacement of props and costume, personal items to collect and things to communicate to colleagues or stage managers. They are also conscious that the artistic performance has finished and a transition is now required, from the symbolic and remarkable events on stage to everyday life, where they are no longer required to be the centre of action or attention. This is when actors mentally prepare to socialise with friends, relatives, fans, the press, potential employers and colleagues, or return home to the demands of family life. Some actors actively seek to receive the audiences' immediate response, whilst for other actors this may be counter-productive or meaningless. Whether passively submitting, ignoring or subscribing to immediate post-performance social interactions, these are often unavoidable. With the exception of the show's director, actors should consider all other feedback in a measured way. External reviews should ideally be reserved following the end of the performance run, as they can no longer impact daily performances.

- Focus: Awareness of transition from the artistic to the social world
- Duration: 5-10 minutes

Advisory guidance on the Contemporary Cool-Down

- Location. The cool-down should be conducted within the theatre space. Possible locations include the stage, the backstage area, the dressing room or any other area (corridors, smaller rooms, corners or passageways). Audiences should not be allowed access to these areas during the cool-down. If stage managers and other theatre staff

are using these areas, they are not to directly interact with the actors during that time. As these parameters cannot be decided prior to encountering the particularity of performance venues, they require negotiation with each theatre management team, in respect to scheduling, staffing levels and available space.

- Duration. The cool-down to be of equal duration with the minimum practiced warm-up, which is normally thirty minutes. Again, this would have to be adapted to the demands of the theatre space itself and the actors' logistical post-performance transport needs. For example, fringe or pub theatres may not allow any post-performance activity within their theatre spaces, due to financial and logistical restrictions, such as lack of dedicated staff to supervise the space during the cool-down. Similarly, when actors are daily negotiating a particularly long commute, making sure they catch the last train home may override cool-down preferences.

- Content. Within the suggested thirty minute cool-down the physical/emotional, the mental and social parameters can all be considered. However, actors may have more time than thirty minutes at their disposal to cool-down from. Equally, if actors only have a maximum of thirty minutes or less, they may occasionally decide to focus on one particular post-performance concern. For example, if an actor has pulled a muscle, strained their vocal chords or experienced any other physical discomfort, the actor's primary concern would be the physical evaluation and care, over mental adjustments or post-performance social considerations. Actors should feel empowered to make informed decisions on their needs and adapt the cool-down accordingly, following each and every performance.

- Order. Depending on the culture of the company, the logistical post-performance engagement with dressers and stage-managers or the demanding nature of touring, the order of the cool-down may be reversed. Actors are expected to conduct the Contemporary Cool-Down without a moderator leading this process – attempting to mirror the actors' agency during the warm-up phase.

- Silence. The implementation of silence serves the purpose of marking and acknowledging the physical/emotional and mental needs, as well as providing the necessary preparation for the transition from the artistic to the social. Silence is meant to counter the actors' hyper-state, whilst marking the end of the performance cycle and gradually returning them to the demands of everyday sociality.

Attitudes and challenges in the conducting of collaborations

In an effort to better contextualise the challenges encountered during this phase of the research, I also engaged with theatre makers for their viewpoint. Insights from directors and playwrights are important as they are familiar with the actors' process, albeit from an angle that provides both distance and an alternative perspective. For example, in an interview on the 5 July 2019, theatre director Imogen Bond suggested that the warm-up is a much more established practice:

> the kind of work that I tend to make tends to be quite physical I suppose, quite hard physically on people…that does demand that people warm-up their bodies, at the very least otherwise they start getting injuries. Most people tend to do a warm-up of their body and a warm-up of their voice and they like to do that in the theatre space. I am surprised when that doesn't happen. Occasionally people don't [warm-up] or traffic [prevents them from arriving on time to do so] but 90% of the people would warm-up (interview).

Bond here suggests that actors often have no choice but to warm-up or 'they start getting injuries'; as a result, warm-up adherence in professional settings is very high '90%', the other

10% accounting for late arrivals at the theatre space or other occasional last minute obstacle, often out of the actors' control. In contrast, the cool-down is neither compulsory within training environments, nor practiced within professional ones:

> actors seem to have to do it [cool down] out in the real world rather than taking a minute [within the theatre space]. I wonder if that is sometimes something to do with sort of wanting to clock off from work, a very practical thing 'I've finished, I am leaving the building' and that is part of the winding down process…I don't know, it is a puzzle to me. Drama schools have a lot to do with this because they are not teaching it or encouraging it in any way. And I think there is a pressure if people have got friends [attending the show], there is a pressure to go down and speak to them and wanting to capture their response to it [the performance] that sort of thing 'what did you think?' wanting to sort of hear their critique. So I think it is probably a combination of things (Bond, interview).

Bond's response to the question of the absence of the cool-down includes two important parameters that have been discussed at length elsewhere in this thesis: the lack of training and the pressure (and pleasure) of immediate socialisation from attending audiences following a theatre performance. Moreover, in an interview dated 27 January 2021, actor trainer and movement expert Anna Healey argued that even when there is seemingly little to cool-down from, the transition phase remains relevant: 'even if you are doing a light comedy, which may not be particularly taxing, it would be interesting to [cool-down] there's been lots of plays where I've found "I don't need a physical or an emotional cool-down" almost as if there is no need to transition. We are so used to just rushing' (zoom interview). This rushing representing an absence of transition was confirmed in an interview on the 26 December 2019 in Athens, with theatre director Athina Stourna:

> usually when the show is over they [actors] have to blend with the spectators, especially if it is a theatre [play] with children, because they usually show children around, they show them the musical instruments, they show them the secrets of the performance, so they have to walk out of the role immediately. When it is a show for adults, it is the kind of socialisation they tend to do, with the audience who want to congratulate them, so there is no time for stepping out of the role (interview).

In both Bond's and Stourna's explanations, the lack of taught cool-down processes within training environments, the lack of planning by theatre directors and the absence of processes

developed by the actors themselves, leaves actors no choice but to immediately engage with audiences, in perpetual performance.

Moreover, these post-performance practices are confirmed by other theatre makers, such as playwrights, occasionally invited to observe rehearsal processes, as part of their close collaboration with theatre directors. For example, in an email dated 19 August 2019 playwright Nina Rapi pointed out:

> I realised that often they [actors] needed more time to de-compress, as they seemed unable to properly recover, at least the actors performing in my play…I noted how quickly actors would leave [the theatre] after the performance to talk to us or to just hang out. I noticed that two or three were conducting some sort of un-coordinated and private cool-down in the auditorium [of the open air theatre] smoking and staring into space…something that to me indicates a need to decompress and one that has not yet been introduced as a method or regular practice (email communication).

Rapi's observation confirms that the cool-down, despite the actors' inability 'to properly recover', has yet to become established; instead some actors use smoking, silence and 'staring into space', almost in a meditative way, to make their transition. This confirms that the post-performance phase receives little attention within professional settings, but at the same time some actors are instinctively looking for ways to make their transitions, with silence, a cigarette or a meditative moment away from socialisation, prior to the challenges of re-integration into everyday rhythms. Similarly, in an interview 26 December 2019 in Athens, playwright Stamatis Polenakis stated: 'I don't know why it [the cool-down] does not exist' (Polenakis, interview); when pressed in regards to his limited experiences on stage as an amateur actor, he described his feelings at the end of a theatre performance: 'relief and I would not want to repeat these experiences, I have performed 2-3 times and I wouldn't want to do it again. There is a tremendous tension, I cannot take it. Even at an amateur level, where the responsibility is much reduced, the tensions are tremendous; I cannot withstand them' (interview). Despite the recognition of the 'tremendous' stresses of performance, the cool-

down remains an unknown post-performance practice; although something is gradually changing:

> I have been working for over 15 years, I have certainly seen a change, over that time, in the way actors look after themselves. There's been a big push over the last 10 years, towards actors looking after themselves very well physically and mentally. During the past 4-5 years there has been a bigger push in terms of [their taking care of] their mental health. I think when I started there was probably 'you finish and to wind down you go for a drink'. Some people still do that. But people recognise that is not always the healthiest way for the wind down (Bond, interview).

Bond's account of the gradual transition that is underway is confirmed, by what Kalabria calls a 'wellness boom' (2017) and by Seton's (2009) assessment: 'I have found that, in the UK, there is a slow yet emerging recognition that the health and well-being of actors is something that many stakeholders, including the actors themselves, need to be concerned with' (2009, p.62). However, the actors' accounts from Chapter 4 indicate that this incremental change is not only slow but also resisted. Why would that be? During an interview on 1 May 2019, theatre director Dominic Hedges explained:

> I think we clock out [after the performance]. After you finish your performance you don't have any incentive to remain at the space anymore: 'you pay me for the extra hour please'. It is quite cynical but I do see that transactional level everywhere. A lot of the cast would be 'my hour has stopped here, I don't need to cool-down'. And a lot of the cast never do a warm-up never mind cool-down. I think it devalues the currency of what performance is (interview).

What Hedges highlights here, is the connection between monetary reward and the act of performance, which may not even include the warm-up or the cool-down, devaluing 'what performance is'; providing a view of the act of performance cut-off from either the warm-up or the cool-down:

> it is maybe a lack of care…a lack of the responsibility with directors…you warm-up because you want to be able to do a good show. People only care about the performance and don't care about what happens afterwards. The [theatre] culture is a product-based kind of thinking…as a director you are only there for the rehearsals, not for the remainder of the show (Hedges, interview).

Although Hedges makes a good point on the responsibility of theatre directors for their actors, however, it is important to consider the cool-down within the context of a process that

most theatre makers ignore. In this context, theatre directors cannot be seen as discouraging a process, whilst at the same time ignoring its existence or potential. Moreover and in contrast with directors, actors are fully aware of the impact of performance, as they are more regularly exposed to its stresses. Therefore, actors are better positioned in becoming pro-active in the meeting of their post-performance needs and the development of processes, even when those are not specifically taught, as in the case of Actor 8, the only interviewed actor in Chapter 4 to develop and practice a cool-down process.

Additional parameters related to the implementation of systematic cool-down processes within professional contexts, are of logistical and financial nature, which may require accommodating. However, Bond suggests that theatre managers may not need to change much, to systematically provide the cool-down immediately following the performance:

> from a financial point of view, it [the cool-down] shouldn't affect the finances of paying actors…stage managers' time is often longer anyway than actors', so they are often here adding up to the number of hours they can work in a week…so if it is within their number of hours it shouldn't have any more financial impact…They [stage managers] are always working, as soon as they audience has cleared, they are working for 30-45 minutes, sometimes longer to clear the stage for the next thing (interview).

Bond's addressing of logistical considerations highlights that stage managers usually require being in the theatre space longer than actors by default, in order to perform a number of functions. Following a theatre performance, those '30-45 minutes' mentioned by Bond would be more than enough time for actors to cool-down, remove their make-up and change.

However, professional practices begin and develop within training environments. In an interview dated 27 January 2021, Healey described how she anticipates the actors' post-performance needs:

> I've insisted that this extra room is available, obviously, that is available only until that building closes. If the play runs into 22:00 they have to close the building at 22:30. By the time the actors are out of costume, they have to put their costumes up on the rails. I think it's [the absence of the cool-down] often because it's at the end of the day but I don't think people are aware of

> it [the 'extra room']. And I think it is something we will have to get used to doing, I think as a culture (zoom interview).

Bond's and Healey's accounts indicate that over and above financial considerations, change of the post-performance culture implies the necessity to replace old habits with new ones, whilst existing post-performance practices are both pleasurable and addictive. For example, when I asked theatre director Athina Stourna about her company's post-performance phase, she described immediate post-performance and alcohol fuelled socialisation: 'the best part of it is when you go out and drink wine. And this is where really, wine helps…it is a time of decompression' (interview). In response, I asked her about the actors that do not drink wine and she half-jokingly responded: 'we never have actors that don't drink wine, I am sorry' (interview). Although it is difficult to take this response at face value, the actors' default alcohol-fuelled post-performance socialisation has been already discussed elsewhere in this thesis to not require further clarification (Maxwell, Seton and Szabó, 2015, pp.109-10); (Mandell, 2017, p.42); (Seton, Maxwell and Szabó, 2019, p.136). The three collaborations that follow, confirm the slow transition that Bond (interview) and Seton (2009, p.62) are referring to, towards a systematic and structured post-performance phase.

First collaboration, Athens, December, 2018

The first group of Athens-based actors that agreed to participate in this research cancelled their participation the day it would begin, despite the exchange of several emails, signed documents, the building of common interest and trust gradually developing over a two-and-a-half-month period. The company claimed nervousness and apprehension at the audience's possible response, in which actors would refrain from meeting with them immediately following the theatre performance, instead requiring to complete a cool-down process first.

The company's concern was that audiences, so used to interacting with actors immediately following the theatre performance, might be offended. The director explained that this was a pertinent factor, especially as there is always a portion of the audience that comprises of friends and relatives, echoing the importance of family for performance artists (Hamilton, 1997, pp.37-43), also noted by Szlawieniec-Haw (2020, p.101). Although this cancellation meant the collection of less data than anticipated, it indirectly informed this research in a powerful way.

The post-performance phase observed

In response to this cancelled collaboration, I nevertheless attended the performance in question and made the following two observations. First, although it was difficult to say whether the audience included relatives and friends, this was an almost full house in an approximately 100 seat theatre. Second, at the end of the performance, an actor exited the theatre space in a hurry to meet two audience members seen briefly waiting outside the venue and then slowly walking away. The actor noticed them leaving just in time, run after them with the costume still on, thanked them for 2-3 minutes and then returned to the theatre and the backstage area. It is important to consider that following a two and a half-hour performance with no interval, the actor left the backstage area within 12 minutes, with the sole purpose of preventing the two members of the audience from leaving without having being thanked for their attendance. This interaction indicated that at that moment, the actor prioritised the post-performance needs of the audience over and above their own.

These observations provided me with the following insight. Within professional contexts, the concept of the post-performance cool-down is interlinked with the pressure felt by actors in regards to the audiences' post-performance expectations, which may be in conflict with the actors' needs. Moreover, to propose systematic cool-down approaches is to essentially ask actors to prioritise their own post-performance needs over those of the attending audience –

this concept may not be acceptable to all actors or all members of the audience, whilst its realisation would necessitate a change of culture in this area. At present, the audiences' possible reaction to a delayed post-performance meeting with cast members remains a primary concern for some actors. More specifically, actors do not feel confident that any benefits acquired from ordered, holistic and systematic cool-down processes would be worth risking a potential falling-out with select members of the audience; this implies the actors' awareness of the power-balance tipped in the audiences' favour during the post-performance phase.

Second collaboration, London, July, 2019

In this collaboration, the performance incorporated four actors enacting an abridged Shakespeare play intended for young audiences, incorporating one or two performances a day; in the morning and early afternoon. The particularities of the space and location of this intendant cool-down were thoroughly discussed with the company's director. The changing room, as well as the balcony space located above the stage were identified as possible locations appropriate for the cool-down, whilst the stage area was characterised as busy, buzzing with stage managers re-setting and thus less preferable. The production's performance score was characterised by the heightened language of the play, the absence of intermission, as well as the challenge of performing for young audiences. Those parameters were further pronounced by the physicality of the performance score, which added to the performers' post-performance exertion.

All four actors verbally and in writing agreed to participate in the cool-down for a week (actors had a total 12 performances left until the end of their run to do so) and to provide their feedback on the process afterwards in face-to-face interviews. During that time, I attended the

play once and was within the theatre building an additional two times - between the changing of sets - to appreciate the limitations of the space for actors, the movement of the audience within the space, as well as the work conducted by the stage managers. In recognition that professional actors are highly trained performance experts, not requiring assistance with their warm-up, I neither led nor observed the Contemporary Cool-Down but provided them with guidance (verbally and in writing), as well as the freedom to personalise it.

From a total of four actors, two provided their feedback (MOR1, MOR2), during interviews on 5 July 2019, whilst the other two did not fulfil that part of the research requirement. Where possible, I thematically organise the actors' accounts in three sections (physical/emotional, mental, and social). Not all actors, however, commented on all aspects of their exertion equally, but provided feedback on the parts that seemed more valuable to them.

Analysis on the physical/emotional aspect

For MOR2, some cool-down suggested instructions seemed familiar: 'I already do [the cool-down] without realising, unconsciously, [for example], when I am in the dressing room [after the show] I rarely speak to people, I isolate myself in a bubble and sort of work [mentally] through the show in a simple way, before I leave the theatre' (interview). MOR2's recognition of something familiar in the Contemporary Cool-Down, led to the awareness of an existing and intuitive (albeit 'unconscious') post-performance approach, where this actor isolates in 'a bubble': 'I rarely speak to people', whilst conducting a mental review of the performance - 'work through the show' (interview).

At the same time, for MOR2, the use of silence was a novel concept: 'the one thing that I don't do really is have a moment of absolute silence, being in a meditative state, so that is what I did a couple of times' (interview). In addition, MOR2 connected the use of silence

with the physical and emotional decompression: 'I went back into the theatre space when nobody else was there and just did some Alexander [Technique], I just sort of let go, I suppose. Which was quite nice actually, calm' (interview). Personalising the cool-down in this way, made MOR2 more aware of recurring post-performance stresses:

> I think one does not realise how much thought and emotion is held up in physicality and I think that when you are playing a certain part you start to adopt a certain physicality that goes alongside that, so for me, I never realised [that] because I have never done a cool-down [before], how much tension [builds up] in different places (interview).

Consequently, for MOR2 the symbiosis between the physical and emotional needs is explicit and their interconnection becomes even clearer with the practice of the cool-down. In other words, it is possible that actors may not feel that they require a cool-down, until the moment they begin conducting it; then the stresses and the 'tension' become apparent. Also, the speed of MOR2's engagement with the cool-down is very encouraging, despite a lack of familiarity in this phase, in theory or practice.

Physical benefits were also discovered by MOR1, pointing out the correlation between the completion of the cool-down process and a feeling of relaxation resulting from it: '[I am] not in that state, I don't know how else to describe it, just hyper, which is the state I'm normally in [afterwards]. So it's quite nice to sort of chill out a bit' (interview). To do so, MOR1 spent 'ten minutes just focusing on breathing' (interview), prior to moving to the mental review of the performance, an aspect this actor kept referring to during the interview.

Analysis on the mental aspect

More specifically, MOR1 pointed out that the primary benefit of the cool-down was the managing of the post-performance mental state, attained by the self-reviewing of the performance just completed:

> yes, [I conducted the cool-down] for 15 minutes. Ten minutes just focusing on breathing and I spent the remaining 5 minutes on how the show went: things that went wrong, things that I can change, things that I can't change …[It felt] good because it highlights staff that may have gone wrong and you can control or things that went wrong which [I can change] for the next

> show, I can do that. It was a good thing to do. I was calmer [afterwards] not as critical as I normally am when I am in that state, [normally] I am quite critical of myself and my performances. So [afterwards I was] just relaxing, [the cool-down] gave me a clearer view of the performance (interview).

MOR1's self-review discoveries become pertinent because they may help actors distinguish what may be in their power to improve for the next performance and equally what may not be; this clarity may reduce immediate post-performance mental stress. For example, private self-reviewing made MOR1 'calmer afterwards', contributing to a calmer transition for whatever comes next, whether this is a return home or post-performance socialisation. Systematic self-reviews can provide a detached state of relative objectivity, despite the actor's hot state, whilst assisting in the transition from artistic to post-performance commitments. Similarly, in regards to the self-review, MOR2 pointed out:

> I guess I kind of like pan through everything and check-in with myself on what worked/didn't work. Because I feel I can get quite negative, 'did I get it right?' For me it's like 'What worked?', so if something was a little bit better [the cool-down helped] in just acknowledging that and if something didn't work to take a moment to sort of let that go; because sometimes you can overthink it (interview).

Here, the verb 'overthink' acquires a negative connotation by MOR2, adding that the cool-down helped in merely marking and acknowledging those moments that have taken place on stage, making mental notes where necessary and then letting them go; this aspect was also noted in MOR1's discovery:

> I find the transition easier [with the cool-down] in terms of just walking around, I am a lot calmer, generally as I have left the theatre. I walk through the park and I feel more chilled out, rather than thinking about the performance, thinking about what has happened, because I have already done it [with the cool-down] (interview).

Both (MOR1 and MOR2) accounts indicate that conducting the cool-down within the theatre space prevents negative thoughts from lingering on. Regarding immediate post-performance mental needs that may need to be managed or met, the cool-down would allow actors the time to engage in immediate self-review without 'overthinking it,' to 'let that go', within the context of work-in-progress (Mitchell, 2009, p.214), providing actors with a calmer post-performance phase and a more ordered transition.

Analysis on the social aspect

MOR2 pointed out that in the past there was apprehension towards the transition between the artistic and social performance: 'I had this thought [regarding immediate socialisation] whilst I was training because for me, that's when all of that [post-performance] schmooze was so scary and actually, if I had taken a quick 5 minutes just to [cool-down before that socialisation]' (interview). Here, MOR2 ascribes a negative connotation to this immediate post-performance socialisation by utilising the word 'schmooze'. Pertinent training in anticipation for such post-performance dynamics, would have provided clarity and confidence in the knowledge that a five minute marking between the artistic performance and post-performance socialisation, might have made this transition less 'scary'. In other words, the cool-down following a theatre performance does not necessarily prohibit post-performance socialisation, but provides a marking at the end of the artistic performance, whilst preparing the actor for the additional demands of post-performance networking.

Moreover, MOR2 raises yet another aspect in relation to this transition from the artistic to the social; the bringing of character traits (mannerisms and behaviours) from the artistic to the home environment (Bates, 1986, p.74, pp.96-7); (Mandell, 2017). This is because the actors' effort to totally immerse themselves in a role often leaves residue that they may take home with them, making work/life balance problematic; neither a surprising nor uncommon concern (Szlawieniec-Haw, 2020, p.102). The cool-down process can contribute in the daily separation of behaviours (artistic, social and private), providing clarity between the artistic identity portrayed on stage and the actors' own identity in private or social settings:

> I am aware of picking up character traits [in my personal life] whenever I am playing a part, 100%…I think I am infiltrated by my characters every time I play a part…It is good to kind of catch yourself…when you are having a moment and realise that a lot of those emotions, these feelings, whatever it is, is a consequence of pursuing this characters' wants, gains (MOR2, interview).

Here MOR2 confirms the importance of separating behaviours, preventing artistic embodiment from infiltrating the actors' social or private spheres, where 'the person loses contact with the deeper sources of their own being. Life itself becomes a continuing series of role-plays, behind which the person's true self is denied' (Bates, 1986, pp.96-7), as in the example of an actor that 'stayed in character during the entire run of the show, she felt no different on stage than she did in her daily routines, which made her constantly miserable' (Sacay-Bagwell, 2013, p.23).

However, Mast (1986) points out that 'difficulty in separating self from role' generally occurs when actors are in the beginning of their training (1986, p.41), a timeline also noted by Szlawieniec-Haw (2020, pp.42-3), often due to the absence or incomplete 'self-objectification' (Mast, 1986, p.41) and the lack of 'balance between self and role or sustaining concentration' (1986, p.42). In other words, 'the actor is always, even if minimally, aware of the distinction between self and character' (Mast, 1986, p.159), and that the separation between on-stage and off-stage behaviour is generally seen as a pre-requisite for actors (Murphy and Orlick, 2006, p.105), not requiring further clarification: 'while my participants identified that they made their characters' emotions and journeys real for themselves as they performed, at the same time, they stayed aware that they were, in fact, performing' (Szlawieniec-Haw, 2020. p.25).

Third collaboration, London, October, 2019

This collaboration was agreed with a London-based theatre company, where a cast of 6 actors performed evening performances of a Shakespeare play. Five out of the six actors agreed to participate, verbally and in writing; however, only two actors provided their accounts on the cool-down following the end of the performance run. Of those two actors, one provided a

face-to-face interview on the 24 October 2019 (MER1) and the other in a skype interview on 27 May 2020 (MER2).

MER1's account

Post-performance socialisation and confidence

MER1 did not provide feedback that could thematically be grouped in the physical/emotional, mental and social categories. Instead, the primary concern revolved around social exertion, incorporating a) the transition between artistic and social performance, inclusive of the necessity for networking, as well as b) the importance of systematic self-reviews to manage poor performances (Konijn, 2000, p.108). Those two interrelated concerns (social performance and self-review) will be considered together, because for MER1 the impact of a good (or poor) performance directly affects the nature of socialisation that follows:

> you do the performance and for whatever reason you've got that adrenaline rush. Because you've had a great performance or you're concerned about your performance or whatever it is. I think, particularly if you've done a good performance, to go out there on a high, [it] is very-very positive. The first few interactions you have, which can be quite a few, because you tend to say to someone 'Hi' and you have a chat with them and then you say 'I've got someone else [to see] and I'll come back to you' and you do the rounds and your adrenaline is keeping you on your toes and your mind is alert and you tend to be able to function better and manage those interactions (interview).

In this account, MER1 indicates an interrelation between the adrenaline rush, the feeling of elation following the assessment of 'a good performance' and the demands of networking following a theatre performance. For the purposes of this research I attended this production's post-performance phase twice; these visits confirmed the demands of this immediate socialisation on actors, placing the needs of audience over and above their post-performance exertion and needs. It is worth noting that what MER1 describes as a 'very-very positive' feeling, is conditional; only when the performance has been 'good'. This raises the question: what happens when the performance is not considered 'good' by the actor?

> you are questioning and possibly doubting yourself, your skills, the performance. Then you are meeting people, often who are in the

> [entertainment] industry who know what you are doing and what you have done and therefore it can have a negative impact in terms of self-criticism. And then if you have had a bad performance, you really do need some structure for the cool-down (interview).

MER1's response confirms the conditionality of a 'very-very positive' post-performance feeling, adding that a cool-down could assist when performances do not come off as intended, in which case: 'you really do need some structure for the cool-down'. The concern of confidence following a poor performance is something MER1 kept returning to: 'I could see how it would help, in re-setting [the actor]. It [the cool-down] would have more benefits if things went badly than if they went well' (interview). In other words, if the performance has been good, actors would need no cool-down, due to their elated feeling resulting from a 'good' performance, but when the performance has missed the mark, actors would require to be mentally preparing prior to immediate socialisation. MER1 added that in the theatre a change of culture is required, similar to the one that took place in football:

> I have been watching football for many years, and the warm-up was almost non-existent in the late 60s and early 70s when I was watching. The players used to come on 15 minutes before the game, they would kick the ball about and then the referee would call them to start the game. Whereas now, they warm-up, they go back inside, they reflect, they get their tactics, they come back out and they play the game…and then after the game, win, lose or draw, they go back into the pitch and do a prescribed warm-down. And that is what we need in the theatre. Theatre has been so ad-hoc in this country for so many years (interview).

In this excerpt, MER1 verbalises the necessity for more structured professional approaches that support the demands of performance, as well as its inevitable exertion. This would require the re-appreciation of the intensity of post-performance stresses from the entertainment industry, inclusive of training environments, producers and theatre makers, in order to provide systematic and comprehensive support for the actors' exertion and transitions either side of the performance phase. Such change could also necessitate the re-ordering of post-performance culture from the attending audiences' point of view, their behaviours and expectations during this phase, which could be better managed and regulated by front of house staff and ushers.

Lack of space and off-stage support

Professional settings became another focal point within MER1's feedback, in regards to the logistical considerations in the conducting of the cool-down:

> because of the way the set was designed, the audience could see through and you [actors] couldn't easily get to the green room without coming out and meeting the audience, which really is not professional. And a couple of times I was rushed and quickly went past people and of course I had to say something to them, say 'hello'. So, on the days when I was unable to get out [of the backstage area quickly] I would stand there and reflect. And the other actors would wander around in silence and after a little while we would start talking to each other. And after that, almost synchronised you would go back to the logistics, the props, the dress, etc. (interview).

This account highlights three separate concerns. First, in some performance venues the access from the stage to the green room may compromise the actors' privacy, making them directly visible to the members of the audience; although this may vary from theatre to theatre and from one set design to the next, this 'really is not professional' (MER1, interview). Could this set of challenges have been identified during the rehearsal period by the set designer, director and stage manager? Second, some members of the audience take advantage of the limitations of spatial arrangements, by immediately engaging actors afterwards leaving them no time to visit the green room prior to their post-performance socialisation. This confirms the attitudes and expectations of the audience during the post-performance phase; personally verified when I saw the performance on the 5th of October. The third concern relates to MER1's observation of the other actors, their preference to also remain still and silent until the audience had left the auditorium, rather than immediately attempting to reach the green room in the presence of the audience. This indicates that silence and privacy were not only preferable to MER1 but also to the other actors, over and above immediate socialisation.

The status of actors in relation to the cool-down

Another point that MER1 made was in regards to the post-performance dynamic between actors and audience and how this may be relative to how well-known the actor may be:

> the cool-down was in my mind, mostly, me saying 'if only' [I had the time to do it properly] but if you are not a well-known actor, you have things to do to try and make sure that your work is seen by as many people as

> possible and you go straight into the socialisation. Whereas an actor that is well-known, he is going to be there and take his time, take a shower and then eventually calm-down…at that level, you know at the Royal Shakespeare Company, at that level, people are going to wait and if there are people the actor really wants to see, that meeting will take place afterwards, on the terms of the actor (interview).

This excerpt confirms post-performance power dynamics between most actors and audiences, in which lesser known actors might feel obligated to utilise immediate socialisation to complement their artistic work on-stage. In contrast, 'well-known' actors, performing 'at that level' may be able to conduct post-performance socialisation on their own terms, not the audience's. However, over and above the context of the competitive nature of the acting profession (Thomson and Jaque, 2017, p.309), a systematic cool-down offered to all actors could provide a platform for the meeting of their immediate post-performance needs, irrespective of status or employment 'at that level'. This could alleviate the pressure that some actors experience, to immediately interact with the audience during the post-performance phase, evident in MER1 account, as well as in the first cancelled collaboration in Athens. Could the Contemporary Cool-Down be considered such a process? MER1's reply was affirmative:

> I think exactly what you wrote in the sheets you gave us. I think that is well-set down and I think it would be the ideal framework. It does not ask too much of the actors and if they want to extend it they can. So, having read through that a few times, I mean I can't say it is full proof but I can see the three stages, it would be ideal for an actor to prepare themselves to come out of performance mode and greet [the audience] (interview).

MER1's response indicates that a simple but effective cool-down approach could be seen as a positive addition to the currently unstructured post-performance phase. This is especially true as the post-performance needs vary from actor to actor and from performance to performance, as indicated in MER2's comparing of a regular city-based performance run to a European tour.

MER2's account

MER2 did not become available for a face-to-face interview immediately following the end of the performance run, but provided an account six months later via a skype interview.

During this period, in addition to the London-based Shakespeare performance, MER2 had also participated in a European tour, cut short because of the COVID-19 pandemic (https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019, 2020). The value of this account lies in the providing of cool-down feedback from two different performance settings and productions:

> [the tour was] my first acting job that I had like that and actually that kind of affected my response to the cool-down, because I was re-checking the original questions you sent on the cool-down. And I actually think that the cool-down helped more on my acting tour, because it was such a long tour. We were doing a show for a couple of months, I felt it [the show] benefited from a cool [down] of that length (MER2, skype interview).

This account suggests that actors taking part in prolonged performance runs may have an additional reason to utilise a systematic way to cool-down, especially when a two month tour incorporates logistics related to travel arrangements from one country to the next: 'we were meant to go to eleven countries, we went to nine in the end' (MER2, skype interview). In contrast, the Shakespeare play MER2 participated in October 2019 was approximately three weeks in duration, located in one venue within the familiar surroundings of London and the support of friends and family to rely on. Furthermore, unlike MER1's account, MER2's feedback was comprehensive, providing answers relevant to all three categories utilised elsewhere in this thesis (physical/emotional, mental and social), making the re-employment of the three-point thematic analysis possible.

Analysis on the physical/emotional aspect

MER2 described the practice of the cool-down in the following way:

> with [the London show], I had less of the luxury of the time and the space [for a cool-down]. It was more of a case of giving myself 5 or 10 minutes of trying to sit and breathe, breathing helps me lot…it just seems to shift everything else in your body. So it was more of that in the [London show], just allowing yourself the time to process your thoughts and that kind of thing. With the tour, there was more of a physical aspect to it, Alexander Technique definitely helps, lying on the floor on semi-supine for 5-10 minutes and again kind of controlling your breath and not letting your thoughts wonder definitely helps. But also there was a physical cool-down of gentle stretching making sure that physically you can prepare yourself for the next thing, but release the tension you have just experienced as well. Breath [control] is really important, I find I use it a lot, outside the acting

> space, in real life is also helpful, with stress and anxiety, it helps a lot. In terms of a cool-down process, it would be integral for me, it is just the easiest, most natural way to kind of calm your body and reset (skype interview).

MER2's account considers controlled breathing as the most important component of the physical cool-down, as it 'shifts everything else in your body'. Also, like MOR2 (in the second collaboration), MER2 used the Alexander Technique following performances, whilst the cool-down approach described here is entirely within the spirit of the notes this research provided as guidance. I asked MER2 how the cool-down would be considered in different productions, in terms of physical demands:

> I would say it depends on the nature of the show that you are doing. With [the London show] for example, I did not feel that I needed a physical cool-down as much. It was definitely the adrenaline you want to control and reflect, but with the other show [the tour] that I was doing, it was [a] very physical show, so I think there was an aspect of just letting your body just rest and release tensions, just having 5 or 10 minutes of lying on the ground and just centre your breathing and that kind of thing. That was really helpful. For the [London show] I did not feel I had to do this as much. It was more of trying to re-focus your energy, but I think deep breathing was the main thing…to make sure some of that emotion and tension is left in the theatre space (MER2, skype interview).

MER2's insight not only confirms the requirement for systematic cool-down processes, but also the necessity to be responsive to the needs that may emerge from each performance score and from one performance to the next. For example, the London show merely required the acknowledgement of the adrenaline rush, the control of the breath and a reflection of the show. In contrast, the amplified physical demands of the European tour required a more sustained and systematic approach to 'release tensions, just having 5 or 10 minutes of lying on the ground and just centre your breathing' (MER2, skype interview).

Analysis on the mental aspect

MER2's account indicates two aspects of the actors' post-performance mental needs. The first refers to the residue of the character or identity management:

> if you are doing a really taxing role, then I think it definitely is beneficial. Earlier last year, I played Iago, in *Othello* and I wish that I had kind of the chance to think about this at that time because it was a very stressful production…Because you change out of your costume and you literally go

> straight out to see friends and family, the residue of that character is still going through your system…when [the role] it is that heavy and emotionally fraught I think with a role like that you really should give yourself the time to get it out of your system (skype interview).

In this excerpt, MER2 acknowledges the conflict between the artistic construct (character) and the actor (self), especially 'if you are doing a very taxing role', as well as the difficulties of transition: 'you literally go straight out to see friends and family, the residue of that character is still going through your system'. This echoes Szlawieniec-Haw's (2020) term *dolesse*, when referring to a grouping of 'taxing role[s]', whereby actors embody 'suffering, distress and/or violence' (2020, p.5). Although only actors themselves can define what may be taxing to them, subject to personal experience and self-assessment, the ability to make informed decisions on the suitability, nature and duration of their post-performance phase could alleviate post-performance stresses and accommodate transitions. Instead, lack of training in this area left MER2 exposed to the powerful forces that still linger on following a theatre performance, stating: 'I wish that I had kind of the chance to think about this [the cool-down] at that time because it was a very stressful production' (skype interview).

MER2 second comment in regards to her post-performance mental needs was the retaining of confidence during the post-performance self-review:

> I know myself as an actor [and] I know I have a tendency to focus on the negative aspects of the performance. If there has been an odd mistake, I'll just fixate on it. And I think it is important to let go of it but also make a note of it, that this is one of the potential things that impede doing the cool-down, because there is definitely the odd show, as with the [London show] where I would come off-stage, rather than trying to go through it logically and focus on how I can fix it for next time, you just beat yourself up about it instead. In which case the quickest thing you wanted to do is get to the bar and have a drink. But I do think it's important to have a moment [to] release that negativity in any way possible, focus on your breathing or do meditation for 5 minutes, let your mind go. I think that would help because I think as actors, we do have a tendency to be our harshest critics (skype interview).

Here, MER2 indicates that the process of self-review during the post-performance cool-down should be seen as necessary, confirming secondary sources discussed in Chapter 2 and

interviews analysed in Chapter 4. This is because MER2 will fixate on an 'odd mistake' and subsequently submit to a seemingly inevitable negative mood; this corresponds to comments made by actors MOR1 and MOR2 (both in the second collaboration), as well as MER2's colleague MER1, who pointed out that following a mistake or a poor performance: 'you are questioning and possibly doubting yourself, your skills, the performance' (MER1, interview).

Furthermore, in the absence of a structured self-review, MER2 response is to try to forget about it in the bar: 'rather than trying to go through it logically and focus on how I can fix it for next time, you just beat yourself up about it instead. In which case the quickest thing you wanted to do is get to the bar and have a drink' (skype interview). This indicates that the consumption of alcohol is not only seen as a way of shedding up-spectrum focus for the more appropriate low-spectrum activity in the evening (Gelernter, 2016, pp.2-3); the unavoidable accompaniment of post-performance networking opportunities (Seton, Maxwell and Szabó, 2019, p.128); the customary self-medicating habit upon returning home (Mandell, 2017, p.38); but also a place of refuge from an unprocessed or negative self-review during the post-performance phase. A systematically practiced cool-down, would encourage actors to immediately self-review their work within the theatre space, with agency and confidence, prior to immediate socialisation or the return back to the private sphere. In this way, any alcohol consumption following the performance would merely be seen as a lifestyle choice to be managed, a concern distinct from the performance itself; neither an enhancer to a celebratory mood nor a self-medicating prop relating to insecurities that may surface during the post-performance phase.

In addition to the challenging aspects of private self-review, MER2 also commented on the question of external review, from audiences and/or peers. Failing to conduct a self-review

prior to post-performance socialisation, may leave actors vulnerable or unprepared in regards to external lay or expert critiques:

> and it's not only necessarily when you get negative comments, when you go to see your friends in the bar, but also if you don't get positive feedback, you start to overthink it, 'oh, did they not think I was very good' so I think that has an impact as well. I think it is always wanting the validation from your peers (MER2, skype interview).

Here MER2 explains why it is important actors remain in control during this phase, by understanding the limitations of external validation and the potentially constructive nature of their own self-review, if they are to retain agency over their work. The actors' confidence on their own skills or the performance score cannot fluctuate depending on the opinion of others (positive or negative), during the post-performance phase:

> it is important to be able to own your own work, because every night is going to be different and you cannot go back to the motivations that were given in week one of rehearsals, because the character is going to evolve and change over the course of a run; if it's a long run. There is no way it is going to be the exact same play in the end that it was at the beginning (MER2, skype interview).

Here MER2 indicates the importance of ownership of one's work, whilst pointing out that performances are not the same as rehearsals: 'every night is going to be different and you cannot go back to the motivations that were given in week one of rehearsals, because the character is going to evolve and change over the course of a run' (skype interview). This echoes Mitchell's work-in-progress concept (2009, p.214) and Hagen's advice to actors for the maintenance of their own standards (1973, p.18) and the managing of their own expectations (1973, pp.192-9). MER2's observations confirm the necessity for systematic self-reviews, to deal with the internal critic or the 'voice in the head' (Flacks, 2015, p. 12), as well as external oral feedback or written reviews during the post-performance phase.

Analysis on the social aspect

MER2 also commented on the actor's social exertion and the importance of ordered transitions:

> this is an aspect [in] which I think the cool-down would be most important…especially when you are about to meet people in terms of

> professional connections, you want to be as calm and collected as possible and confident in yourself as possible. But then you have the voice in the back of your head 'I need to get out there as quickly as I can, because I don't want to leave this important person waiting'. So you've got this Catch-22. You need to give yourself enough time to mentally collect yourself and try to let go as much of this tension as you can but also, make sure you are not making people wait for too long. So, it is a problem. But I think if there is at least some way in which you can try and condense that process down, it is worth doing, because I definitely think it is worth doing in that situation, for networking (MER2, skype interview).

Here MER2 is verbalising just how important post-performance transitions really are for actors, especially when it comes to the customary networking opportunities that tend to follow, corresponding to MER1's concerns: 'if you are not a well-known actor, you have things to do to try and make sure that your work is seen by as many people as possible and you go straight into the socialisation' (MER1, interview). Similarly, for MER2, post-performance networking opportunities leave actors in a 'Catch-22', as those are prioritised over and above their immediate psychophysical needs, also in correspondence with Morris's insight: 'essentially theatre is capitalist…you are thrust into this marketing thing, more so in drama schools than in the profession, when you are kind of encouraged to market yourself, to see yourself as a product, to go out and make sure that you've met the agent, that they have seen you' (zoom interview). To meet the networking demands without entirely compromising the actors' needs, MER2 proposes actors 'condense that [cool-down] process down', in order to 'make sure you are not making people wait for too long'. Even a condensed cool-down would benefit actors, because there is inherent agency in the adapting of the cool-down, which can be shortened, but always considered within the performance cycle.

Other concerns mentioned by MOR1, MOR2, MER1, MER2

The following section reflects five concerns expressed by the participants, which collectively link a variety of parameters discussed in insightful ways. These include the challenges of establishing the cool-down (novelty of practice/audience pushback); the nature of limited

spaces in the backstage area and the particular utilisation of silence (spatial considerations and the use of silence); the understanding of transitions as regular and consecutive (successive transitions); the necessity for the adaptability of the cool-down in order to meet the demands of the actor, which may vary from one production to the next (an adaptable cool-down process) and the role of training environments in the establishment of a cool-down process (the role of drama schools).

Novelty of practice/audience pushback

In the second collaboration, MOR1 verbalised a concern related to the perceived novelty of the cool-down and how this could affect the post-performance performer-audience dynamic:

> if there is a common understanding [of the cool-down], if it becomes a thing that is done, [if it becomes] more established, then there would be less sort of pushback against it in terms of understanding. I mean I've not had people in to see [the performance] since we started this thing [the cool-down] to have that [social] negotiation 'guys I am going to be 15 minutes', but I feel if I prepare them [the audience] beforehand it would not be that big of a thing. I think it [the cool-down] should be more of a thing and if it is more of a thing people will be more accommodating to do it (interview).

In this excerpt, MOR1 acknowledges that the cool-down as an unknown process may receive pushback by attending audience members, but that this could be minimised by informing them in advance of this process. This is because at present, in many performance spaces, audiences are accustomed to almost immediate post-performance interaction (Schechner, 2002, p.211); 'the dressing rooms are invaded…they just open the door, many don't even knock' (Actor 16, interview); 'you have no time to even take your costume off. Ideally you would ask for some additional time, but how can you decline to beloved friends or enthusiastic members of the audience their hasty joy?' (Actor 15, email communication).

In view of such established post-performance dynamics between actors and audiences, MOR2 also anticipates pushback, not only from audiences, but also from actors. For example, MOR2 admitted to being sceptical at first in regards to her participation in this research: 'I was a bit pessimistic probably' (interview), confirming the apprehension felt by

many professionally trained actors, when a new approach is suggested outside training environments. Similarly, MOR1 was also in two minds about conducting the cool-down process following a theatre performance: 'it is useful [the cool-down]. The only caveat I had, is that, because it is not a well-known thing, it may feel pretentious and maybe other people may think "what are you doing" and everyone at the [theatre] was made aware that we are doing this, but still you had people [interrupting the cool-down]: "oops, I did not realise that you are there"' (interview). Preconceived ideas on the cool-down are not only related to each individual actor but also to the culture of each theatre company, reflected by the following examples of the conducting of the warm-up:

> what is the culture of the company? It is an interesting question in particular because it brings me to something that happened 10-12 years ago when I was working for [theatre company]…it was never really spoken of as a company warm-up…it was not seriously labelled as a company warm-up but everyone always got together and always played games…And the idea that someone not doing it was ludicrous…It was so fun, it was kind of you'd be looking forwards to it, look forward to playing those games and you'd look forward to having a laugh. You'd normally sing one or two songs maybe as part of the warm-up as well, because music was always a big part of their work (Actor 13, interview).

In Actor 13's account, the informal nature of the warm-up phase did not present a lack of clarity for actors, because the culture of the company was implicitly understood by everyone. Similarly, Actor 14 confirms that there are several theatre companies that encourage collective pre-performance warm-up processes: 'my experience with theatre companies such as Complicité and Shared Experience is that there would be a communal physical warm-up, prior to the half-hour mark by which time you had to be in the dressing room' (Actor 14, interview), also confirmed by Morris:

> if the company has an ensemble tradition, they will have an ensemble warm-up. Companies that have less of an ensemble tradition won't and smaller companies won't. I worked with a company once, where it was stipulated in the contract that we had to do a warm-up. And that created problems for the actors…they found that their human rights were infringed (Morris, zoom interview).

These accounts reflect the different cultures within theatre companies and subsequently the different professional environments actors have to adapt with each new contract, not only in respect to the less understood cool-down but also to the widely established warm-up.

Spatial considerations and the understanding of silence

MOR1's concern on the limitations of backstage availability to conduct the cool-down, also noted by Filmer (2006), suggests that actors often have to be creative in search of appropriate spaces. Similarly, MER2 points out:

> the cool-down is really affected by what kind of show you are doing and also what kind of space you are in, it depends on the resources you have. But also, for example, if you are in a tiny fringe theatre…a lot of the time they emphasise on getting you out as soon as possible. So, for the show I did afterwards [the tour], there was a show after us, so we had 15 minutes [after the performance] and then we had to get out, including getting your staff out and changing and clearing everything. So, the cool-down is definitely affected by having the luxury, having the space and the time [to conduct it] (skype interview).

MER2 account is indicative of both the limitations of space, as well as limited perception of the post-performance phase by the management of performing venues, which often 'emphasise on getting you out as soon as possible'. In addition, in many venues it is challenging to conduct the cool-down on the performance stage, as the audience normally takes anywhere between 10-15 minutes to leave the auditorium and because the stage managers are often required to immediately re-set for the next performance. Despite those logistical challenges, MOR1 managed to work around them:

> by the dressing room, there is a corridor and there is a little space there, because it was the quietest place in the theatre, they [the stage managers] are still moving things around, so it was the quietest area I could find. But you [still] get the random person that is going through that area to the dressing rooms (interview).

MOR1 here links spatial considerations with notions of silence, preferring the quietest place in the theatre to conduct the cool-down and MOR2 similarly attempted to conduct the cool-down not only in silence, but within a part of the theatre where privacy may be found: 'I always try to find a space where I am by myself' (interview). It is worth noting, however, that the Contemporary Cool-down does not suggest actors finding a quiet or private place to

conduct it, but only that the cool-down may be conducted in silence within the theatre space. MOR1's attempt to conduct the cool-down in 'the quietest place in the theatre' and MOR2's similar intention 'I always try to find a space where I am by myself', indicates that their own silent state (an internal parameter) and a quiet or private space within the theatre building (an external parameter) were often seen as interlinked preferences.

Successive transitions

It is also important to recognise that actors do not only require making a transition from the artistic to the social performance, but also from one performance to the next, as they often conduct two performances a day. For example, in the second collaboration the four actors performed twice a day: 'we have performances at 10:30 and 14:00' (MOR1, interview). Similarly, MER2 account suggests that when a double performance is scheduled – morning/ afternoon or matinee/evening - actors are required to carefully manage their available time between shows, as multiple transitions are required:

> we would do two shows a day and between the two shows we would have about one hour, so it was a situation in which, as an actor, you actually had the luxury of knowing you had that hour in which you tried to re-focus yourself and almost re-start and prepare yourself again for another show. Because I think time is an important factor when it comes to the cool-down. So, yeah, I did actually find myself kind of going back to it [the cool-down] a bit then (MER2, skype interview).

The necessity for double shows further highlights the actors' requirement to manage their transitions, not only from the warm-up to the performance or from the performance to the demands of professional networking, but also from one performance to the next, requiring actors to become transition experts. The cool-down considered and taught as an inseparable part of the performance cycle, can contribute in providing actors a platform for these transitions, to take place with confidence and authority.

The cool-down as an adaptable and regular practice

MER2 also pointed out that flexibility of post-performance practice will be required, if the cool-down is going to be helpful to the actor:

> It's probably also really helpful to figure out the cool-down that works best for you. So, if I am really pressed for time and I don't have half an hour in this instance before I go to meet this person, what can I do that will benefit me the most, physically, mentally and emotionally, to try and shed the residual aspects of the performance and get out there and be my best self?… You get your cool-down to be whatever few stages and points will get you to that state the quickest (skype interview).

Flexibility then becomes central for actors who want to personalise their post-performance process and adapt it daily after each and every performance, according to their post-performance needs and external commitments. For example, if during the cool-down's physical assessment the actor discovers an injury, the cool-down will be dominated by this physical preoccupation and less with a mental review or immediate socialisation. Similarly, following a lingering emotional state the actor may emphasise on self-review and a calming of the actors' thoughts and breath. Equally, preparation for an important and much anticipated post-performance meeting may be the only preoccupation during the cool-down phase for the actor. Once actors are trained in the rationale and practice of the cool-down, the next step will be to refine and personalise it accordingly in professional settings:

> it really depends on the particulars, the theatre space you are in, the play that you are doing, the cast that you are with and I think you may need to adapt your particular cool-down for each of these circumstances, but I still think it's an important thing to do and I would definitely keep utilising it myself, if/when the theatres re-open. I think it's definitely important thinking about it in the long run as well, not just in an immediate sense of physically letting it go, mentally letting it go so you can go and have the rest of your evening with peace of mind, I think. It's important for your mental health in the long run, especially if you are playing a very taxing role. If you are not finding a way to cope with a release, every night, especially if it's over a long [performance] run, it does take its toll some more, if you hang on to any kind of negativity or pressure, from yourself or others, it's important to process that at the time, for your mental health in the long run (MER2, skype interview).

Here MER2 points out that adaptability and regularity of practice are equally important 'in the long run', in order to better handle 'any kind of negativity or pressure from yourself or others'. The concerns of adaptability, length of performance run, the theatre space particulars and the managing of expectations and reviews, collectively require systematic and regular cool-down practice during the post-performance phase, especially 'if you are playing a very

taxing role'. Also of note, is this actor's strong engagement with the cool-down, declaring: 'I would definitely keep utilising it myself, if/when the theatres re-open'. Similarly, MOR1 stated: 'it is that transition for me that has changed [from artistic to social performance] and the way I view my performance afterwards has changed in a positive way' (interview).

The role of drama schools

Notwithstanding comprehensive feedback on the physical, emotional, social exertion and the value of an adaptable, systematic and regular cool-down process, I asked MER2 whether this process could be taught at training environments:

> the drama school I went to was very focused on movement and every time we finished a session there was always a cool-down after that. And you think to yourself, 'what should the difference be?' Because in a performance you are exerting yourself, over an hour or two, not only physically but also mentally and if you should be doing a cool-down after any kind of movement session, I don't see why you should not be doing one after a performance, which is a more strenuous experience, even if it may not feel like, depending on the show you are doing, I still think it is important. So I think it would definitely be an advantage to have some kind of lesson towards this in drama school, because from my experience, I think one of the things that gets drilled in you, especially towards the end, when you have your showcases and your public shows, is that aspect of 'great, you are done, go out and network' there isn't much about what happens in between. I definitely think it would be an advantage because teaching and training actors for a career in the long run in this industry, then you've got to have the stamina and the endurance to do that career for as long as you can and if that means introducing coping mechanisms like these that will enable you to kinda be more aware of your mental health and also be more confident in your own craft. I think that's definitely really important. Drama school is the place for that to be taught (skype interview).

Here MER2 argues in favour of cool-down training in drama schools, because cool-down processes are already taught and completed after training sessions, very similar to the one described by Saivetz (1998) – so, 'what should the difference be?' between that and a post-performance cool-down? Especially, as already suggested elsewhere in this thesis, neither training nor rehearsals can compare with the intensity of performance (Mast, 1986, p.42); (Geer, 1993, p.150); (Konijn, 2000, pp.162-3); (Zucker, 2002, p.1); (Orzechowicz, 2008, p.152); (Mitchell, 2009, p.218). In other words, it is precisely because the intensity of the performance is so much greater and multifaceted that any training or workshop session, that a

systematic and comprehensive cool-down is required. Similar to MER2's view that the cool-down requires explicit teaching at training environments, MOR2 makes a related point:

> I don't know about other drama schools, but we were taught so many meditative things to kind of help you focus and get back into your natural state but never told to do this after a performance, it's interesting. [These meditative things] are more about you getting rid of your tensions and habits in order to then adopt new ones and then the process assumes that you get back into your own the next day…I think it could be offered, you could be told, to do this [the cool-down] after [the performance] as well (MOR2, interview).

In relation to the question of how better to educate actors on the post-performance needs, both MOR2 and MER2 indicated the potential of training environments in establishing systematic post-performance practices, in order to provide awareness and 'coping mechanisms' during this phase. Within the context of the insights provided and strong engagement from actors in this chapter, both confirming a gap in this area of practice, a question emerges: how has the cool-down remained under-developed, whilst other approaches are constantly being devised and introduced in other areas of training?

Why does this gap in practice remain?

In a zoom interview dated 27 January 2021 actor trainer Anna Healey provides two explanations that are useful in this discourse: First, that 'we think a lot about beginnings but I am not sure we take care of [the] endings in things' and second that 'there is such an obvious reason for why we warm-up, to drag ourselves from our pedestrian life into that almost religious experience, whereas after we sort of had the catharsis and that closure almost happens as you bow, for some people the clapping and the bowing is "it's over with"' (zoom interview). In other words, there is a lot of emphasis in the preparation and anticipation of performance, which is seen as an end result in itself; anything after the performance may not seem as an obvious part of the performance cycle. The relief at the end of the performance, the exhilaration from the clapping of the audience and the bowing, almost ritual like, signify

an ending in the actors' mind. In this analysis, the warm-up represents a more obviously explicit need compared to the cool-down; the latter requiring a more nuanced approach.

Notwithstanding this juxtaposition, the absence of the cool-down ignores the adrenaline rush remaining in the body for up to an hour (Hormone Health Network, 2018), that emotional states may not easily subside without a conscious approach (Bloch, 1993) and that visceral drives may distort the actors' social presentation to others during immediate post-performance socialisations (Loewenstein, 1996); (De Ridder et al., 2014); (Williams et al., 2016, p.901). However nuanced the cool-down may feel, its regular and systematic use can provide the necessary platform for actors to meet a variety of post-performance needs. Similarly to Healey's response, attempting to provide an answer that explains this gap in training, on the 5 July 2019 director Imogen Bond also explored this issue:

> it's hard [to explain it] isn't it? Because it sort of doesn't make sense…I have certainly noticed actors wanting to look after themselves physically and mentally and so I think that if it [the cool-down] was suggested to people and they did it they would start to find it very useful. And even taking ten minutes I think would probably help. Just to bridge that sort of moment. It also depends on the demands of the play they are in. I can't imagine what it's like to play *Hamlet* and then come out the other end and go straight to the pub, it sounds completely mad to me. I had a friend who played [a famous role], she found it really difficult to come out of the play, because it is so demanding mentally…the demands of that, we all know about it we all talk about it but no one is actually doing anything about it (Bond, interview).

Bond's anecdotal evidence on the challenging nature of some particular roles is also confirmed by actor trainer Shona Morris in an interview dated 19 January 2021: 'I had a friend of mine, a very young wonderful…actress that was playing [a famous role]…and was feeling very vulnerable at the end of that play…she was given…a ritual to do, a spiritual cleansing ritual that she did at the end of each performance to restore herself back to wholeness' (zoom interview). Both Bond's and Morris's anecdotal accounts indicate that some roles may have a greater emotional and mental post-performance impact than other roles. However, actors may be unable to meet those needs because of lack of training: 'drama

schools have a lot to do with this [absence of a cool-down] because they are not teaching it or encouraging it in any way' (Bond, interview). Bond also suggests that the cool-down requires to be adaptable, depending on the 'demands of the play' and can be as little as 'taking ten minutes', marking the transition between performance and socialisation 'to bridge that sort of moment'.

Also, Bond suggests that stage managers changing or re-arranging the set may be off-putting for actors who are trying to cool-down. This assumes that actors would require conducting the cool-down within a silent theatre; this should not be seen as a prerequisite. There is a difference between conducting the cool-down in silence and expecting the theatre space to be silent. For example, Schechner (1985) notes how the warm-up phase can seem like a 'crazy-house sense of things: people rushing around…reciting lines, singing songs – not trying to be in synchronicity with the whole group but refreshing/revising their own individual or subgroup scores' (Schechner, 1985, p.219). Equally, actors can practice silence, without expecting the rest of the theatre to come to a standstill during this time. The busy nature of collaborative work in the theatre requires actors being adaptable to the working conditions they find.

Initial findings

This chapter provides actors' and other theatre makers' accounts on the challenges and benefits of the post-performance cool-down within professional settings. It reveals a spectrum of responses and engagement: from hesitancy and cancelled collaborations, to adoption and the combining of skills acquired from previous training, synthesising their own version of the cool-down. Actors discovered specific benefits, such as faster and more marked transitions, achieved through a conscious self-review process and the utilisation of silence. The actors'

low status during the post-performance phase is highlighted, indicating that actors would rather endure the cost of their neglected post-performance exertion, rather than risk offending attending audiences or missing out on professional networking opportunities. Also, the cool-down was mentioned as an important tool in accommodating the frequent and successive transitions necessary during a theatrical tour.

In the next and final chapter, this thesis's conclusions will be collectively considered, a synthesis comprising secondary sources (Chapter 1; Chapter 2), the semi-structured interviews and thematic analysis in Chapter 4, as well as the engagement with professional actors in the practical conducting of the post-performance cool-down (Chapter 5). Chapter 6 will also discuss the contributions this thesis has made in this area of research, as well as propose recommendations to address existing gaps in practice.

6. The performance cycle reconsidered

This final chapter highlights the main conclusions of this research, in bullet-point format. This is followed by a reiteration of the three main reasons for the under-development of the cool-down, the particular nature of the actors' post-performance exertion, including the occasional need for silence or the experience of feelings of emptiness. Also, a re-ordering of the audiences' perception of the post-performance phase is proposed, if the actors' needs are to be consistently met. *Limitations*, discusses the restrictions encountered and acknowledged during the conducting of this research, whilst *Positive Impact* highlights the engagement of the participating actors with this research and their quick adoption and adaptation of the Contemporary Cool-Down. Feedback from actors and other theatre makers suggest training environments as potential catalysts in the establishment of the cool-down in professional settings. The thesis's recommendation is related to this assessment: that the cool-down be taught and further developed within training environments. This is followed by some final thoughts on the actors' personal responsibility for their own process and the cultivation of their agency as professionals.

Bullet point conclusions

- Despite concerns reflected in secondary sources on the absence of the cool-down, at present, the performance cycle is actualised as follows: warm-up; performance; socialisation. Evidence from interviews and field work presented and discussed in this

thesis indicate that actors would benefit from the following triptych: warm-up; performance; cool-down.

- Currently, actors receive no post-performance cool-down training and ignore the existence of cool-down approaches suggested in theory or attempted in practice by researchers and theatre makers. As a response, this thesis collectively presented, discussed and evaluated eight post-performance cool-down practical approaches (Chapter 1) and devised a new cool-down protocol, the Contemporary Cool-Down, utilised for the purposes of this research (Chapter 5).
- Overall, there are three main parameters related to the underdevelopment of the cool-down: lack of cool-down related training, internalisation of stresses and enjoyment of perpetual performance (Chapter 4; Chapter 5).
- The nature of post-performance stresses represent exertion distinct from training, rehearsal or other areas of the actors' process. Instead, such stresses are directly related to the anticipation (during the pre-performance phase) and the intensity of the act of performance (Chapter 2; Chapter 4; Chapter 5).
- A distinction is made between the post-performance cool-down and therapy. The cool-down has been considered, throughout this thesis, in the same way as the warm-up; a process accommodating the necessary transitions required within the theatre space (Introduction; Chapter 1).
- A distinction is made between the cool-down, de-role and the de-brief (Introduction; Chapter 1).
- Although the stage actors' post-performance needs may seem similar to those of dancers or athletes, they are distinct, requiring cool-down processes with the particular nature of those stresses in mind (Chapter 2).
- Although influences from Eastern performance practices can be seen as beneficial in terms of playful experimentation and education, actors working within the Euro-

American tradition would benefit from the development and utilisation of cool-down processes emerging within the same performing tradition, for purposes of authenticity and for the avoidance of imitation and cultural appropriation (Chapter 3).

- Professional settings and the individual needs of each actor differ widely (Chapter 4). The cool-down requires being an adaptable process, if it is to consistently meet the actors' post-performance needs, depending on the role, post-performance networking requirements, backstage space, inclusive of additional parameters, such as those encountered in small or large scale touring (Chapter 5).
- Resistance in the cool-down process within the entertainment industry was identified. This is understood within the context of the absence of established discourses and practices developed within training environments (Chapter 4; Chapter 5).
- Feedback from actors, theatre makers and educators indicates that the role of training environments is seen as pivotal in the gradual establishment of the cool-down firmly within the performance cycle, with the potential to attain a similar stature to the warm-up (Chapter 4; Chapter 5).
- Some actors revealed a preference for privacy and for quiet areas within the theatre when conducting the cool-down. Although the Contemporary Cool-Down suggests the utilisation of silence, there was no instruction for them to conduct the cool-down in private or quiet areas (Chapter 5). This suggests that the preference for silence, finding a quiet space in the theatre and seeking momentary privacy, may be interrelated preferences for some actors during this phase.
- On their way home or upon their return home, some actors communicated the experience of feelings of emptiness. Cool-down training would provide the knowledge and context with which to interpret and synthesise post-performance experiences (i.e. emotions, visceral drives, self-review, adrenaline rush, networking),

directly meeting these needs and avoiding the ignoring or exaggerating of their impact (Chapter 4; Chapter 5).

- Engagement with actors revealed their adoption of the Contemporary Cool-Down and its combination with previously taught processes, personalising and adapting it to their actual post-performance needs (Chapter 5). This conclusion provides optimism for the future implementation of the cool-down, indicating that when encouraged, actors are quick to acknowledge and meet their post-performance needs.

Three reasons for the underdevelopment of the cool-down phase

First, interviews in Chapter 4 and 5 indicated that the actors' perception of the performance cycle directly reflects their lack of training experiences in regards to the post-performance cool-down. Second, within the spectrum of 'costs' and 'rewards' (Szlawieniec-Haw 2020, pp.4-6), actors enjoy multifaceted rewards and cultivate a positive outlook, making them prone to internalising 'costs' encountered. Third, actors take pleasure in perpetual performing during the post-performance phase (Panoutsos, 2017), which can also be seen as a requirement in terms of networking (Seton, Maxwell and Szabó, 2019, p.128). These three factors, namely, lack of education, internalisation of stresses and enjoyment of perpetual performance, help explain the absence of post-performance cool-down practice. At the same time, theatre directors and producers cannot be seen as actively resisting change in this area of practice, largely due to the absence of specialised training and familiarity with the overall concept of the cool-down.

More particularly, in the case of directors, their often limited or much less regular exposure to the stresses of performance, renders them unable to contextualise the nature and intensity of the post-performance phase. Also, once rehearsals transition into live performances, directors

are rarely present during the post-performance phase to witness the actors' stresses first hand, due to their engagement with their next professional obligation and may only occasionally return if they are contractually obligated to do so. In the case of theatrical producers, they may be seen as even less informed compared to directors, in regards to contemporary discourses on the cool-down and its potential. Importantly, as long as the concept and practice of the post-performance cool-down remains an unknown or obscure area within training environments, theatre producers will remain unable to respond to hypothetical pressures regarding its implementation. At the same time, 'theatre is capitalist' (Morris, zoom interview); should any post-performance practice imply longer operating hours for buildings and subsequently higher costs for producers, it is to be anticipated that those calls are sure to be resisted. However, in Chapter 5 theatre director Imogen Bond anticipating such concerns pointed out that:

> from a financial point of view, it [the cool-down] shouldn't affect the finances of paying actors…stage managers' time is often longer anyway than actors', so they are often here adding up to the number of hours they can work in a week…so if it is within their number of hours it shouldn't have any more financial impact…They [stage managers] are always working, as soon as they audience has cleared, they are working for 30-45 minutes, sometimes longer to clear the stage for the next thing (interview).

Although Bond's assessment may be true for many theatres, each theatre operates under different management structures and budgets. Such diversity may provide the opportunity to resist the systematic implementation of the cool-down, should it be deemed as a costly and unnecessary process by producers. It is not unrealistic to anticipate resistance of this nature, from what Prior et al. (2015) collectively consider 'the demands of industry, financial, political and relational challenges' (2015, p.69), even with a future mainstream establishment of the cool-down at training environments. In other words, co-ordinated pressure to producers from a variety of stakeholders, such as Equity (https://www.equity.org.uk/) or the Federation of Drama Schools (https://www.federationofdramaschools.co.uk/), would be easier to envisage once the cool-down is widely established in training environments and actors are

encountering resistance in its implementation within professional settings. This could potentially lead to legislation that will make theatre spaces difficult to refuse the accommodation of both the post-performance cool-down and the pre-performance warm-up, as phases inseparable from the performance cycle. None of these steps however, will be meaningful (or possible) without the prior establishment of the post-performance cool-down in training environments, which would provide actors with the knowledge, agency and confidence to request that these practices are also systematically applied within professional settings.

Lack of cool-down training

In Chapters 4 and 5, actors identified a lack of familiarity with the practice and concept of the post-performance cool-down, even though the cool-down following workshop sessions remains an established practice: 'in a performance you are exerting yourself, over an hour or two, not only physically but also mentally and if you should be doing a cool-down after any kind of movement session, I don't see why you should not be doing one after a performance, which is a more strenuous experience' (MER2, skype interview). Similarly, MOR2 points out: 'I don't know about other drama schools, but we were taught so many meditative things to kind of help you focus and get back into your natural state but never told to do this after a performance' (interview). In other words, although training environments are fully conversant with the importance of physical training and maintenance for actors, the link has yet to be established between exertion and the post-performance phase: 'I don't think I have ever heard any director mention it…even from drama school I remember we used to get out of the theatre as quickly as possible' (Actor 3, interview); 'I can't remember ever discussing cool-down techniques at drama school' (Actor 5, email). Instead, actors are taught to place the audiences' needs over and above their own: 'I think one of the things that gets drilled in you, especially towards the end [of your training], when you have your showcases and your public shows, is that aspect of "great, you are done, go out and network" there isn't much

about what happens in between' (MER2, interview); confirming secondary sources in this regard (Seton, 2009, p.11); (Maxwell, Seton and Szabó, 2015, p.108). Lack of training of the post-performance phase in general and the cool-down in particular, remains a primary factor explaining the absence of conceptual and practical understanding of this phase.

Rewards and positive outlook

Although much is made of the significant costs actors face in pursuing highly competitive careers (Mast, 1986, p.134); (Wangh, 2013, p.138), such as their lack of social status and support (Entertainment Assist, 2016, p.133), occasionally also from family members (Thomson and Jaque, 2012, p.362), drug abuse (Entertainment Assist, 2016, p.168), low remuneration (Maxwell, Seton and Szabó, 2015), the attraction to this profession remains remarkable. To elucidate this contradiction, one should also consider literature indicating positive outcomes for actors: 'the motivation to perform is…intrinsic, rather than being based on fame and fortune…optimal experiences are also common in this group when skill and challenge combine to produce a pleasing state of euphoria' (Hamilton, 1997, p.5).

Numerous accounts suggest that actors find pleasure in subscribing to notions of meaning related to their work and lifestyle: 'the joy of performing, the sense of accomplishment in the mastery of one's practice…the wonderful sense of belonging during production and the frequent evocation of the metaphors of "family"' (Seton, Maxwell and Szabó, 2019, p.128). It has also been noted that actors are 'at their happiest whilst they were on stage' and are passionate about their work (Entertainment Assist, 2016, pp.50-4, p.171), which represents 'a sense of purpose and a belief in the ability for representations to help others or the world at large' (Szlawieniec-Haw, 2020, p.83). Actors regularly experience feelings of 'joy and…fulfilment' (Szlawieniec-Haw, 2020, p.56), 'arousal [that] can sometimes reach the level of ecstasy' (Scheiffele, 2001, pp.184-5), flow states (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975); (Martin and Cutler, 2002; p.351), whilst actors are taught to incorporate enjoyment and pleasure in

their work (Callery, 2001, p.71). Even longevity can also be seen as a positive outcome particular to actors: 'they say actors tend to have long lives. This could be because of the healthy alternation of extreme tension at the beginning of a production and total relaxation after it ends' (Nakamura, 1990, p.93).

These rewards explain why despite significant costs, the acting profession continues to attract thousands more entrants that it can possibly absorb (Simkins, 2009; 2019), as well as the actors' cultivation in an 'extraordinary degree of faith in the future…indicative of commitment to the occupation and the identity it provides, albeit in the face of a seemingly contradicting present' (Mast, 1986, p.148). The nature of these rewards also illuminates why actors are eager to internalise challenges and normalise stresses (Filmer, 2016, p.288), including post-performance ones, explaining the lack of cool-down processes developed by the actors themselves, despite the lack of education: 'actors are disposed to "finding the positive" and, perhaps, to maintaining a bearing of optimism and "good energy", even when the circumstances of their lives are presenting challenges which are having profound effects on their wellbeing' (Maxwell, Seton and Szabó, 2015, p.109). The nature of such optimism, cultivated through sustaining effort, enthusiasm and faith, seeps into the post-performance phase, normalising and internalising stresses, which otherwise would be considered significant and explicit.

The pleasure of perpetual performance

A third factor that is worth repeating here is the pleasurable nature of perpetual performance: the utilisation of the heightened energy attained on stage, to engage with immediate social interaction (Panoutsos, 2017). During this phase, the physiological activation remains significant: 'I would definitely compare performing to taking drugs. It gives you a very all-natural high…that will last for several hours after the performance' (Actor 13, interview). In addition to the majority of interviewed actors consuming alcohol during the immediate post-

performance phase (Chapter 4), the correlation between performance highs and drug highs, was regularly repeated by actors: 'I like this tension…what happens after [the performance], give me action and take away my soul. But if I get cross, I will take a Lexotanil; I will go and argue with my friend; I get crazy' (Actor 2, interview); 'I know a few actors who like to smoke weed after a show. Quite a bit of cocaine is consumed too' (Actor 9, email communication). These remarks indicate a pleasurable post-performance state, which can be compared to and regularly combined with alcohol, illicit drugs or over the counter medication.

Perpetual performance was confirmed by most actors: 'remove my make-up, get changed and head to the pub' (Actor 7, email communication); 'I hate premiers, as people I don't know, fans approach to congratulate and talk and I only want to dance and party' (Actor 12, telephone interview); 'I would go out happy and almost give a second performance with jokes and talking to friends and others who waited for me' (Actor 15, email communication). Theorists confirm this tendency '[to] self-reward…allowing themselves something of a treat' (Seton, Maxwell, Szabó 2019, p.140), resulting in the absence of a marked and systematic cool-down, seen to negatively affect actors: 'there are actors with drink problems and I think the job has probably contributed. I know actors whose careers have been ruined by drink. There are also a whole load of actors in AA' (Actor 9, email communication); 'sometimes I would try to sleep in the day, to try to catch up from this, I never really did and I got very, very ill from that' (Actor 13, interview). These remarks suggest that in the absence of a marked post-performance phase that systematically considers the actors' physical/emotional and mental states, perpetual performance becomes the default practice. There is much pleasure in combining this hyper state attained on stage, with the stimulation that immediate socialisation provides, the one providing fuel for the other, combined with alcohol, occasionally resulting in sleep deprivation or burn out.

The actors' post-performance needs are distinct and particular

Physical/emotional, mental, social

The necessity for the establishment of systematic post-performance cool-down process emanates from a variety of post-performance needs, distinct to theatre actors (Chapter 4; Chapter 5). Some refer to physical needs: 'it was very painful on my knees' (Actor 8, email communication), whilst others refer to emotional recuperation: 'during the important performances of our lives, as far as I am concerned, I think it [the cool-down] requires a considerable amount of time' (Actor 1, interview).

Mental considerations are primarily located around the process of self-review and the maintenance of confidence 'when you do a flashback of the day, beginning from your entrance into your dressing room and assessing your performance: what grading would you give yourself' (Actor 15, email communication); 'to self-critique; what did I not do well?' (Actor 16, interview). Similarly, MOR1 stated: 'it was a good thing to do. I was calmer [afterwards] not as critical as I normally am when I am in that state, [normally] I am quite critical of myself and my performances. So [afterwards I was] just relaxing, [the cool-down] gave me a clearer view of the performance' (interview). Benefits of the mental self- review were also highlighted by MOR2: 'I can get quite negative, "did I get it right?" For me it's like "What worked?", so if something was a little bit better [the cool-down helped] in just acknowledging that and if something didn't work to take a moment to sort of let that go; because sometimes you can overthink it' (interview).

Social exertion sometimes reflects the pressure actors experience to engage with audiences immediately following performances: 'you have no time to even take your costume off. Ideally you would ask some additional time but how can you decline to beloved friends or

enthusiastic members of the audience their hasty joy?' (Actor 15, email communication). Other times actors bypass immediate post-performance socialisation (systematically or occasionally) and go straight home: 'mostly, there is no transition, because I almost always go straight home…since I do not drink alcohol, I retire to the private' (Actor 11, email communication). Moreover, MER1 pointed out that the cool-down would be particularly helpful when performances do not go as planned, and the actor may need a more structured transition before socialising with the audience: 'you are questioning and possibly doubting yourself, your skills, the performance…if you have had a bad performance, you really do need some structure for the cool-down' (MER1, interview). The combined impact of the performance exertion and the variety of post-performance social obligations, requires actors developing and conducting an intentional, personalised and systematic approach during this phase.

Silence and emptiness

Notwithstanding the variety of needs discussed in greater detail in Chapters 4 and 5, two concerns are worth reiterating here: the actors' need for momentary silence and the experience of a sense of emptiness, both rarely discussed outside therapy contexts (Chapter 1). Following Szlawieciec-Haw's concept of 'costs and rewards' (2020, pp.4-6) and her view on the need 'to build personalised understandings of health' (2020, p.67), over and above 'a broadly conceived realm of order or disorder' (Bell, 1997, p.116), this thesis has attempted to distinguish the need for conscious transitions, rather than pathologizing the actors' work:

> I don't know whether the answer is to pathologize. You know, this thing about wellness, how the students tend to take it up, and this is only anecdotal, they say they have psychological and emotional problems. Then wellness is about some kind of therapy. But what [question] I think is helpful: what is the creative aspect, which is different to the everyday space? (Morris, zoom interview).

Similarly to the distinction here provided by Morris, between every day and symbolic/creative contexts, this thesis makes another distinction: exhaustion, momentary feelings of emptiness or the need for silence following a theatre performance is not

necessarily the same as to be unwell. Actors trained in the post-performance cool-down would be taught to expect fluctuations of their energy resources and mood, as a natural by-product emanating from the intensity and nature of performance.

Silence

The need for momentary silence and/or privacy was echoed by several actors engaging in this research: 'I found that I needed a few minutes just to myself after the show, to reset a bit before speaking to others' (Actor 5, email communication); 'after the most physically active productions…I have almost demanded the right to have time to myself after the performance was over' (Christoffersen, 1993, p.180); 'when I am in the dressing room [after the show] I rarely speak to people, I isolate myself in a bubble' (MOR2, interview); 'I went back into the theatre space when nobody else was there and just did some Alexander [Technique], I just sort of let go, I suppose. Which was quite nice actually, calm' (MOR2, interview). Actor 8 further confirmed the need for post-performance silence, as well as privacy: 'if the show is emotionally very taxing, I will take myself off to a quiet area as I get out of costume and focus on bringing myself back to a safe, level mental space' (email communication); 'I have observed that following the performance I become almost agoraphobic' (Actor 1, interview), whilst MOR1 conducted her cool-down in the most private areas of the theatre: 'it was the quietest place in the theatre…but you [still] get the random person that is going through that area to the dressing rooms' (interview).

The link between silence, which was suggested in the Contemporary Cool-Down guidance (Chapter 5) and privacy and quiet areas (which were not), was unexpected and surprising. Actors may conduct the cool-down in silence, without expecting to be in a private area of the theatre or/and in an area that is quiet. However, a quiet space, silence and privacy kept coming up as interlinked preferences. Conducted either way, accounts presented and analysed in this thesis indicate that momentary post-performance silence can provide a strong marker,

where actors do not have to perform to others (artistically or socially). This would allow actors to absorb the intensity of the performance just finished, and prepare for the demands of immediate post-performance socialisation.

Emptiness

A feeling of emptiness may not become immediately apparent because of the hot states, visceral drives and lingering adrenaline rush, feeding off the actors' high energy levels, which eventually fade away: 'after a leading part…I feel empty, like a bottle, in my head, my mind and even my body enjoys the relaxed feeling of "having done good work"' (Actor 10, email communication); whilst Actor 11 described: 'the feeling is that of "after" - as in sex… relaxed, but also emptied' (email communication). Similarly, Actor 3 pointed out: '[after the performance] it was a huge dissonance…in that limbo state, being buzzed and high at the same time as being low and depressed. Not depressed but there is a big gap in your soul for like an hour' (Actor 3, interview). These accounts indicate that this feeling of emptiness coincides with the actor's return home, where no further socialisation takes place. During this period, actors should ensure they hydrate, replenish their depleted energy resources with nutritious food and receive the full benefits of recuperation that only sleep can provide (Littlehales, 2016); (Jones, 2017).

Cool-down training can play a part here too, by anticipating feelings of emptiness as a possible post-performance effect, in order not to take the actor by surprise. Here, the accurate definition of 'emptiness' is important, not to be confused with depression, as highlighted by psychiatrist Dr Paul Ian Steinberg in his *The Misdiagnosis of "Depression"* (1989):

> major depressive episode is relatively easy to diagnose. Features includes significant, persistent, and prolonged dysphoric mood ("blues"); feelings of guilt and self-reproach; difficulty in concentrating; thoughts of death; and psychomotor retardation or agitation. Vegetative signs of depression include early morning wakening; loss of weight, appetite, pleasure, and energy; and loss of interest in sex and in the patient's usual interests and activities (Steinberg, 1989, p.1106).

Anyone familiar with the intensity of actor-related processes, such as full-time training or the demands of professional performances, would immediately realise the unlikelihood (but not impossibility) of being diagnosed with 'major depressive episode' and at the same time remain a working actor. This is because 'vegetative signs', 'loss of weight' and 'energy' are counterintuitive with the high energy levels required to perform up to 8 times a week in high pressured professional settings. It is more likely that what actors are occasionally referring to: 'not depressed, but there is a big gap in your soul for like an hour' (Actor 3, interview), what Steinberg calls 'depressive mood', distinct from depression (Steinberg, 1989, p.1106). Importantly, without training in regards to the post-performance phase in general and the cool-down in particular, the distinction made by Steinberg (1989) between depression and depressive mood may not always be understood by actors; 'non-major depression' or 'depressive mood' should be anticipated within the normal variation of mood and the context of post-performance exertion. The distinction is useful for actors, if they are to avoid regularly misdiagnosing themselves:

> ideally the term "depression" would be reserved for patients with antidepressant-responsive depressive illness. This usage is impractical because our colleagues, not to mention our patients, will continue to use "depression" to denote a symptom, a syndrome, or even a variation of normal mood (Steinberg, 1989, p.1107).

Steinberg's 'impractical' confusion between 'depression' and 'variation of normal mood' is pertinent for actors, who often find themselves 'physically, mentally and emotionally sapped' (Szlawieniec-Haw, 2020, p.44) during the post-performance phase. However, within post-performance contexts, such experiences should neither be seen as alarming nor surprising. The abrupt end of the performance leaves the actor having to cross the threshold from artistic and symbolic constructs, to social interaction. This state may be exacerbated by interactions of personal nature or professional networking opportunities, where 'non-dramatic impression management is given extraordinary weight in making career outcomes' (Mast, 1986, p.136). In the absence of embedded cool-down training education, awareness and anticipation of the

impact of consecutive transitions, actors may associate such states with feelings of loneliness or depression. Instead, actors should anticipate the stark contrast between the intensity of performance and the demands of post-performance sociality, as well as the daily reintegration into the home environment, entailing its own demands and obligations.

A reordering of the audiences' post-performance expectations is required

The value of re-ordering the audiences' expectations was not immediately apparent at the beginning of this research. An example that stands out is the last-minute cancelation of the first collaboration (Chapter 5). This indicates that improving the actors' agency during the post-performance phase through education may not work on its own, whilst the pressure and expectation of immediate post-performance socialisation remains unchanged. As Mast (1986) points out, actors are in the popular imagination 'in the enviable position to transcending the mundane…the dramatic actor emerges, not as a symbol of the constraints of social life, but instead as a symbol of the potential freedom of human existence…the reminder that this transcendence is an intrinsic human quality' (1986, p.193). Oftentimes, however, it is only this 'enviable position' that the public seems to be familiar with, whilst understanding little of the actors' processes or post-performance needs.

At the same time, audiences already recognise that performances require a certain transition within the actor having to take place (States, 1985). Audiences do not only appreciate the story-telling itself, but also attend the theatre to witness the effect of these transitions: 'the actors are there to display the process of acting, while the audience is intendent to observe the process' (Labędzka, 2008, p.43). They know that a theatre performance is a fictional, symbolic and artistic form of story-telling performed by professional actors, whose job among other things is to normalise those transitions. For example, audiences are aware that

actors are not to be interrupted during their preparation and warm-up before the play commences and audiences normally refrain from doing so, through the support actors receive from front of house managers and ushers (Orzechowicz, 2008, p.146). In contrast, some audiences seem unaware that actors are required to undertake yet another transition when the performance ends and some enter the backstage area immediately after the end of the performance (Schechner, 2002, p.211); (Actor 15; Actor 16) or expect immediate post-performance interaction by the stage-door as standard (stage-door debate, Chapter 2). If the cool-down following a theatre performance is to become common practice amongst actors, a certain re-ordering of this dynamic between audiences and actors may have to take place, where the actors' needs will be considered over and above those of the audience.

Moreover, this re-ordering would not be an entirely novel concept but simply an extension of existing practices controlling the actions, expectations and attitudes of the audience, during but also prior a theatre performance. For example, where possible, theatres have separate entrances for actors and audiences:

> what if the audience and the actors were to enter through the same door at the same time? What if all the equipment of the theatre, however arranged, were available to public view at all times? What if we eliminated the distinction between backstage and onstage, house and stage, stage door and theatre door? No theatre that I know has done this, not absolutely (Schechner, 1983, p.82).

Distinctions within theatre buildings 'between backstage and onstage, house and stage, stage door and theatre door' imply that the separation between actors and audiences is not a novel idea but an old and fundamental one in the theatre. Furthermore, these distinctions are necessary as they mark ritual from theatre: '[in ritual] a division between the stage and the audience hardly exists. Ritual theatre is the antithesis of the theatre of illusion, where the actors reproduce an "image of life", which the spectator looks at from one side' (Flaszen, 2010, p.65). Creating the conditions for the conducting of a regular and systematic cool-down would require the expanding of these distinctions during the post-performance phase,

involving a pro-active front of house staff managing the audiences' post-performance expectations, whilst providing uninterrupted time for actors to conduct the cool-down within the theatre building. In the same way that audiences' pre-performances actions and expectations are carefully managed by ushers and front of house staff, post-performance expectations would have to be equally managed to 'reinforce the boundary between onstage and offstage' (Orzechowicz, 2008, p.146).

Limitations

A larger number of actors participating for interviews, than the 16 actors that ultimately engaged (Chapter 4), would have benefited the analysis and discourse of the actors' attitudes and needs. Also, ideally all actors would have shown themselves available for interviews, however, only half attended face-to-face settings, instead choosing to provide their feedback via email communication. The inability to ask for follow-up questions and clarification, somewhat limits the value of some responses received.

Similarly, I would have preferred a larger number of theatre companies to conduct the Contemporary Cool-Down, than the eventual 3 that agreed and the only 2 companies that showed their actors available for the process and the conducting of interviews. This is because this research can only be accelerated by the dynamic involvement of more and more of its practitioners (actors) within their working environment (the theatre). This practical component, when coupled with the receiving of their valuable feedback on their adoption and adaptation of their process can provide a dynamic feedback loop, which can potentially accelerate knowledge in this area of research.

In addition to my own limitations already discussed in introductory Chapter B of this thesis, it is important to reiterate that my experiences as a professional actor did not only provide me with embodied and tacit knowledge, which would be generally considered advantageous in the study of theatre processes, but also with professional and cultural blind spots, implicitly informing the conducting of this research. This is also discussed in Chapter 3, where I admit no practical knowledge of Eastern performance, having worked firmly within Euro-American theatre processes. At the same time, Schechner (2002) indicates that it is the awareness of a wide spectrum of viewpoints that matters, not absolute objectivity: 'there is no such thing as neutral or unbiased. The challenge is to become as aware as possible of one's own stances in relation to the position of others – and then take steps to maintain or change positions' (2002, p.2). Aware of such known (and potentially unknown) limitations, I have attempted throughout this thesis to set aside my personal preferences in regards to actor training, ideal rehearsal systems or working conditions and mainly focus on the cool-down phase, as this is reflected (or ignored) in secondary sources, interviews and field work.

Positive impact

The conducting of this research represents a positive step forward for the future of the cool-down practice. This is not because we are currently living in what Kalabria calls a 'wellness boom' (2017), because change is inevitable as 'actor training changes age by age' (Prior, 2012, p.25) or because similar change has been noted as 'slow yet emerging' (Seton, 2009, p.62). There is nothing inevitable in the improvement of processes; their establishment and cultivation requires sustaining effort. Instead, optimism derives from the actors' and theatre makers' engagement in this discourse (Chapter 4) and the adoption of its practice (Chapter 5).

Moreover, evidence of such optimism can be found elsewhere: 'during the past 4-5 years there has been a bigger push in terms of [their taking care of] their mental health. I think when I started there was probably "you finish and to wind down you go for a drink". Some people still do that. But people recognise that is not always the healthiest way for the wind down' (Bond, interview). Similarly, RADA trainer Shona Morris has already noted 'a huge culture of change at schools, not just how you teach and actually what do you teach. It may well be, in a year's time that the model of teaching in drama schools is completely transformed' (Morris, interview). Likewise, Guildhall, Mountview and Central trainer Anna Healey provides proof that change is currently taking place: 'I believe very strongly in the cool-downs and in some of my classes I tell my students that actually, a cool-down is sometimes more vital than a warm-up, which sounds as controversial' (Healey, interview). Importantly, participating actors in the conducting of the Contemporary Cool-Down in Chapter 5, provided evidence of strong engagement with this process, commenting on the applicability of the suggested cool-down and its adoption for their future projects:

a) MOR1: 'it helped me to slow down rather than having this intense energy of being on stage, I felt a lot calmer going [back] into the world and talking to people…it is that transition for me that has changed [from artistic to social performance] and the way I view my performance afterwards has changed in a positive way' (interview).

b) MOR2: 'I don't have any qualms about adopting it, especially if I feel it has been that kind of performance or some important meeting afterwards, then it would be something I would consider doing [the cool-down]' (interview).

c) MER1: 'I think that is well-set down and I think it would be the ideal framework. It does not ask too much of the actors and if they want to extend it they can…I can see the three

stages, it would be ideal for an actor to prepare themselves to come out of performance mode and greet [the audience]' (interview).

d) MER2: 'it's an important thing to do and I would definitely keep utilising it myself, if/when the theatres re-open. I think it's definitely important thinking about it in the long run as well, not just in an immediate sense of physically letting it go, mentally letting it go so you can go and have the rest of your evening with peace of mind, I think…especially if you are playing a very taxing role. If you are not finding a way to cope with a release, every night, especially if it's over a long [performance] run, it does take its toll some more, if you hang on to any kind of negativity or pressure, from yourself or others, it's important to process that at the time, for your mental health in the long run' (skype interview).

Looking forward and the role of education

Secondary sources (Chapter 2), interviews with actors (Chapter 4) and feedback from cool-down practice (Chapter 5), indicate the necessity of taught cool-down practices becoming established within training environments, if they are to provide an alternative to the default immediate post-performance protocol of immediate post-performance socialisation, often combined with alcohol consumption and drug use (over the counter medication or illicit). In practice, training environments could experiment with cool-down approaches and protocols already in place by researchers (see Chapter 1), develop their own or utilise the Contemporary Cool-Down (Chapter 5) devised for the purposes of this thesis. Irrespective of choice, it is difficult to envisage a cool-down process utilised at professional settings without its prior introduction and incorporation within training environments, as a compulsory part of the actors' education. This is because neither the entertainment industry nor the actors themselves are better positioned to initiate this change.

From an industry perspective, the over-subscribed nature of the acting profession implies that actors have generally little agency on the conditions of their work and are having to constantly adapt to their working environments, which currently do not incorporate cool-down protocols. The competitive nature of the entertainment industry is not a place where new ideas are easily nurtured, because 'theatre is capitalist' (Morris, zoom interview), also reflected by Healey's 'time pressure on the product' (Healey, zoom interview). In other words, professional settings operate under logistical and financial pressures to deliver results that can be predicted with consistency and accuracy. The nature and urgency of those pressures would prevent the development and experimentation on processes, such as the cool-down.

From a practitioner's perspective, actors seem unable or uninterested to develop their own post-performance processes, instead normalising any exertion experienced or utilising it to fuel professional networking and/or personal experiences, in perpetual performance. Peer pressure and the need to belong upon entering the acting profession is also a factor for this lack of development: 'one can be labelled as pretentious if one asks not to be disturbed "because I am preparing" – even amongst serious acting casts. Rather than appear pretentious or unfriendly, a withdrawal to a toilet cubicle allows an actor to easily enter a more personal space' (Filmer, 2006, p.144). This was also confirmed by Morris: 'I experienced that as an actor… when I was at the National Theatre and I would warm-up on the stage with friends in the company…going back to my dressing room through the corridor feeling…I was less of an actor because I wanted to do a warm-up' (Morris, zoom interview).

Other reasons explain the under-development of the cool-down include the actors' youthful energy, enthusiasm and optimism of young entrants to the profession. Their seemingly

unlimited energy that characterises their early professional years, where the body can quickly recover from an irregular lifestyle, can explain why actors refrain from recognising the dangers of perpetual performing and the opportunities missed due to the lack of a conscious cool-down. Those parameters indicate that it is highly unlikely that actors will unaided develop post-performance processes.

By this process of elimination, the responsibility of developing and establishing systematic post-performance processes is left with training environments: 'if this practice is established at drama schools, it is likely that graduates will take the practice into employment environments, eventually formalising this ritual as best practice in the general acting profession' (Taylor, 2016, p.199). Morris describes another possible avenue, in which the incorporation of the cool-down may be adopted from some theatre companies, whose members eventually would bring these practices into the domain of drama schools, in turn making these processes widespread and mainstream over time:

> the warm-up established in the industry because it started in experimental theatre groups, Lecoq training, Complicite, Shared Experience, Joint Stock, all these companies that incorporated into their practice quite a lot of physical training and so there was a need for the warm-up for that. A lot of those practitioners then worked at drama schools and then this became part of drama school…so there is something about this cross-pollination between experimental groups, whose practitioners become teachers in drama schools then go back and cross-pollinate conventional theatre (Morris, zoom interview).

Morris's retrospective analysis provides much needed perspective on how organic processes that actors may take for granted, are not necessarily the product of logical planning but meandering accidents or cross-pollination forming over several decades. This approach, however, does not guarantee that the cool-down may inevitably become mainstream in the same way. Also, this longer view can be seen more passive and less urgent. If the actors' post-performance needs are seen as contributing to the quality of performances and the effectiveness of the actors' transitions, then a more intentional and direct approach is

required. At the same time, in professional settings no process is compulsory; there is nothing to stop actors from utilising, further developing (or ignoring) processes in regards to acting, preparation or recuperation. However, the current lack of post-performance training limits the actors' ability to make informed choices, where they can choose to acknowledge, manage, meet or occasionally 'knowingly' ignore (Barton, 1984, p.44) their post-performance stresses. As a result, some actors, such as Actor 8, borrow techniques from other areas of knowledge and apply them to their post-performance needs: 'I do this [the cool-down] using techniques that I learned through counselling and therapy rather than through acting teachers' (email communication). Actors learning to practice and experiment with cool-down processes during the early stages of their training, would subsequently feel empowered to develop their own approaches and over time personalise them further to meet their ever changing needs.

Final remarks

A cool-down process would not claim to represent a silver bullet that would single-headedly meet actors' every post-performance need, without effort, refinement and constant adaptation from the actors conducting it. Such a claim cannot be made of any other actor-related process and the cool-down is no different. Equally, some needs may need specialist treatment outside training or professional environments. Weil (2004) points out that 'the nature of consciousness…is ultimately, the only problem worthy of intellectual effort…other problems being less precise statements of the same thing' (2004, p.1). In this spirit, systematic post-performance cool-down practice would increase the actors' awareness and ability to better distinguish the role from the actor, exhaustion from injury, depression from depressive moods, adrenaline rush from joy, hot states from visceral drives and better negotiate their transitions; 'it's the understanding that we do need that transition from what is art essentially and what is life' (Healey, zoom interview).

Although a systematic and conscious cool-down process would improve the actors' management of their immediate post-performance needs, such practice cannot claim to change or replace the actors' habits and life choices, located in other areas of their lives. Ultimately, the balance between the actors' artistic and private lives remains their personal responsibility and a process of continual self-cultivation. In attempting to balance the sheet between private, social and professional commitments, the cool-down phase can become mainstream practice, through its compulsory teaching at training environments, in order to accommodate the actors' transitions and needs following a theatre performance.

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Interviews and correspondence

Chapter 4

Actor 1, interview with author, Athens, Greece, 28 December 2016.

Actor 2, interview with author, Athens, Greece, 22 December 2016.

Actor 3, interview with author, London, UK, 17 February 2107.

Actor 4, skype interview with author, 11 January 2017.

Actor 5, email communication with author, 16 March 2019.

Actor 6, email communication with author, 21 March 2019.

Actor 7, email communication with author, 28 March 2019.

Actor 8, email communication with author, 5 June 2019.

Actor 9, email communication with author, 13 June 2019.

Actor 10, email communication with author, 03 August 2019.

Actor 11, email communication with author, 15 August 2019.

Actor 12, telephone interview with author, 16 August 2019.

Actor 13, interview with author, London, UK, 04 October 2019.

Actor 14, interview with author, London, UK, 16 October 2019.

Actor 15, email communication with author, 28 December 2019.

Actor 16, interview with author, Athens, Greece, 30 December 2019.

Chapter 5

MOR1, interview with author, London, UK, 5 July 2019.

MOR2, interview with author, London, UK, 5 July 2019.

MER1, interview with author, London, UK, 24 October 2019.

MER2, skype interview with author, 27 May 2020.

Other interviews and correspondence

Jenna Kumiega, email communication, 27 January 2017.

Dr Deborah Saivetz, email communication with author, 01 March 2019.

Leigh Tredger, interview with author, London, UK, 6 March 2019.

Dominic Hedges, interview with author, London, UK, 1 May 2019.

Joan MacIntosh, email communication with author, 19 May 2019.

Kasia Zaremba-Byrne, interview with author, London, UK, 21 May 2019.

Tina Bicât, interview with author, London, UK, 06 June 2019.

Jenna Connelly, email communication with author, 11 June 2019.

Patrick Hughes, email communication with author, 18 June 2019.

Nina Rapi, email communication with author, 19 August 2019.

Yuta Ishiyama, email communication with author, 12 October 2019.

Professor Daniel Meyer-Dinkgräfe, email communication with author, 17 October 2019.

Athina Stourna, interview with author, Athens, Greece, 26 December 2019.

Stamatis Polenakis, interview with author, Athens, Greece, 26 December 2019.

Shona Morris, zoom interview with author, 19 January 2021.

Anna Healey, zoom interview with author, 27 January 2021.

Appendix

Questions relating to the cool-down – Chapter 4

This set of questions was used in semi-structured interviews with actors.

1. What do you normally do prior to a theatre performance?
   Is this something that was discussed/practiced at drama school?

2. What do you normally do following a theatre performance?
   Is this something that was discussed/practiced at drama school?

3. Are you aware of Eastern cool-down approaches?
   If you had a choice, would you consider using Eastern or Euro-American methods for a cool-down? Why?

4. In your theatre experience, do you see your fellow actors conducting a warm-up and the cool-down equally?

5. Are you particularly aware of your physical, emotional and mental needs following a theatre performance? If so, how do you attempt to meet them or manage them?

6. How do you experience the transition between the artistic performance on stage and your immediate socialisation with friends, colleagues, relatives or work related meetings?

Questions relating to the cool-down – Chapter 5

This set of questions was used via e-mail communication, when actors could not attend face-to-face interviews.

1. What do you normally do prior to a theatre performance?
   Is this something that was discussed/practiced at drama school?

2. What do you normally do following a theatre performance?
   Is this something that was discussed/practiced at drama school?

3. In your theatre experience, do you see your fellow actors conducting a warm-up and the cool-down equally?

4. Are you particularly aware of your physical, emotional and mental needs following a theatre performance? If so, how do you attempt to meet them or manage them?

5. How do you experience the transition between the artistic performance on stage and your immediate socialisation with friends, colleagues, relatives or work related meetings?

6. Please feel free to write anything related to the warm-up and cool-down processes for theatre actors not included in the above questions. This may be a particular observation prior to or following a theatre performance, such as the nature of socialisation or the exertion felt. It could include the responses from actors when the audience goes backstage to meet the actors following a theatre performance. Or it could be observations of post-performance exertion and how it may be different if one has a supporting rather than a leading part; participating in a comedy or drama. It could also be the description of moments after a performance that are difficult to verbalise but have a certain quality about them.

Post cool-down process questions used for both face-to face interviews and email communication questions – Chapter 5.

1) Have you noticed any benefits from doing the cool-down in terms of physical decompression? Any mental benefits on the conscious reviewing of the role at the end?

2) Have you noticed any benefits in the handling of social interaction following the performance?

3) Would you consider practicing the cool-down on a regular basis and establish it as part of your practice?

4) What would you change or add to the suggested format of the cool-down in order to better meet your needs?

5) Do you think the cool-down should be taught as standard practice in training environments, side-by-side the warm-up?

St Mary's University Twickenham London

Approval Sheet

Name of proposer(s)	Christophoros Panoutsos
Name of supervisor	Dr Michelle Paull
Programme of study	PhD Drama
Title of project	Cool-down for actors.

Supervisors, please complete section 1. If approved at level 1, please forward a copy of this Approval Sheet to the Faculty Ethics Representative for their records.

SECTION 1: To be completed by supervisor.			
☐ Approved at Level 1. ☑ Refer to Faculty Ethics Representative for consideration at Level 2 or Level 3.			
Signature of Supervisor (for student research projects):	Michelle C Paull	Date:	22/11/18

SECTION 2: To be completed by Faculty Ethics Representative.			
☑ Approved at Level 2. ☐ Level 3 consideration is required by Ethics Sub-Committee.			
Signature of Faculty Ethics Representative:	Michael Fitz	Date:	22/11/2018